AN ESSAY ON PAINTING

WRITTEN IN ITALIAN

BY COUNT ALGAROTTI

F. R. S. F. S. A.

Χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά.

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FRANCESCO ALGAROTTI

WHEN Rome had extended her empire into Aſia, Africa, and almoſt over all Europe, ſhe ſaw her citizens arrived at the ſummit of military glory. In their pretenſions to ſcience, however, the Romans gave place to the Greeks, whom they revered

vered as their maſters in the School of Arts.

ENGLAND hath eſtabliſhed her dominion by ſettling as numerous and more diſtant colonies; while conqueſt hath diſplayed the enſigns of her power, and extended her commerce throughout the whole world. Equally reſpectable in arts and arms, the Engliſh nation claims the ſuperiority alſo in the world of Science; particularly with regard to the cultivation of thoſe arts, which contribute moſt to the ſtrength and ſplendour of a ſtate. Theſe are Agriculture and Architecture; one the ſovereign miſtreſs of the polite arts, the other a nurſing mother to all. Painting, indeed, hath but recently engaged the attention of the Engliſh, ſo far as to inſpire them with a deſign of contending with the Italians, for thoſe honours of which

which the latter have long boaſted an excluſive poſſeſſion. The deſign is, nevertheleſs, become formidable, in being promoted by a Society, among whom ſuperiority in place is only the tribute due to ſuperior merit; a Society, inſtituted by a free people, and compoſed of the choiceſt public ſpirits of their age and country, who, while they generouſly encourage the beſt artiſts, excite emulation in others, by exhibiting the works of all to public view; therein appealing even from their own judgment, to that of a learned, ingenious and ſenſible nation.

Under ſo diſtinguiſhed a patronage, it is hardly poſſible this elegant art ſhould not ſoon flouriſh in London, as it hath long done in the milder climates of Parma, Venice and Rome.

In the mean time, that I may not be wanting, in my beſt endeavours, to reſtore

ſtore painting to its former ſplendor in my own country, I have attempted, in this Eſſay, to inveſtigate its firſt principles; and to point out thoſe ſtudies, which are requiſite to form a compleat painter, all which the ancient maſters, therefore, actually cultivated. What benefit may hence reſult to my countrymen, I preſume not to determine: I am not conſcious, however, of doing any thing with which I ought to reproach myſelf, altho', incapable of exciting their zeal, I ſhould awaken ſo noble a ſpirit in the breaſts of foreigners, or ſhould even furniſh them with the means of diſputing with us, the prize in view. Motives of univerſal philanthropy ought, doubtleſs, to prevail over partial and local attachments to particular men or countries.

PERMIT me alſo to add, that, if our Italian painters are ſoon to be excelled by the Engliſh, in the practice of their profeſſion,

feſſion, it behoves us, at leaſt, to ſhew that we are not inferior to any people in the world, in the knowledge of its theory: ſo that even our rivals may willingly be inſtructed by us in an art, which hath been the delight and ſtudy of every poliſhed and ingenious nation, in all climates and in all ages.

Bologna, March 17, 1762.

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AN ESSAY ON PAINTING.

INTRODUCTION.

THAT ſo few excel in the ſciences and liberal arts, muſt, I imagine, be principally attributed to the two following cauſes: one, the little care that parents generally take to apply their children to thoſe ſtudies, for which nature ſeems to have intended them; the other, the misfortune under which young people, even thoſe left to the direction of nature, commonly labour, in not being led by the ſhorteſt and eaſieſt roads to that perfection, which they are deſirous of attaining.

To remove the firſt of theſe obſtacles it were to be wiſhed, that the deſtination of children to this or that employment was no longer left to the caprice of ſimple and illiterate parents. Hence it is that no regard being paid

Al fondamento che natura pone (1),

as the poet expreſſes himſelf, we ſee ſo many men out of their element, and ſuch numbers loſt in the common crowd, who, had their genius been pro-

(1) To the foundation laid by Nature.

perly conſulted, might have diſtinguiſhed themſelves greatly, and turned out a light and an ornament to civil ſociety. It cannot, I ſuppoſe, be doubted, but that a youth muſt make the greateſt progreſs in thoſe ſtudies, in which he is ſeconded by his natural diſpoſition; and the ſloweſt, on the other hand, in thoſe, in which he is oppoſed by it, and is, of courſe, obliged to be continually fatiguing himſelf; working, as it were, againſt the current. It is evident therefore, that one of the principal objects of every government ſhould be the chuſing proper ſtates of life for the major part of the riſing generation: And a deſign of ſo much importance might, perhaps, in a great meaſure, be accompliſhed, were Princes but to place men of penetration in the public ſchools; in order to examine and trace out the various inclinations of the youth who frequent them. By laying before them, from time to time, inſtruments of mathematics, of war, of muſic, and, in ſhort, of all the other arts and ſciences; and by repeated trials of them in the uſe of theſe inſtruments, they ſhould be forced and conſtrained to manifeſt their ſeveral geniuſſes, in the ſame manner that the artful Ulyſſes, by introducing glittering arms as well as precious jewels to the daughters of Lycomedes, found means of diſcovering Achilles, who lurked amongſt them in the habit of a female(2).

(2) Such methods, I find, are taken in Berlin, where a philoſopher may conſider himſelf at home, and in his own country.

THE firſt obſtacle being thus removed, it will be proper to think of removing the ſecond. This might be done by ordering the education of children in ſuch a manner, that, like medicine in the treatment of diſorders, it ſhould be nothing more than a continual attention to ſecond the indications of nature; to which end alone every thing ſhould be directed. For, ſurely, nothing can be more abſurd, than, for years together, equally to purſue the ſelf-ſame method of education with boys deſtined to the gown, the ſword, and the liberal arts; and, as is too commonly the caſe with us, make them indiſcriminately learn thoſe very things, which the greateſt part of them ought, perhaps, when become men, to forget. The Romans, if we may believe Tacitus, applied their children wholly to arms, to eloquence, to the law, juſt as their natural inclinations led them(3). Now, if there is any art, which, beſides a natural genius for it, requires a long, uninterrupted, and ſteddy application, it is PAINTING: that art, in which the hand is freely to expreſs the boldeſt and moſt beautiful conceptions of the fancy: that art, whoſe buſineſs it is to give relief to plain ſurfaces, light to dark ones, and diſtance to things under the very hand:

(3) Et ſive ad rem militarem, ſive ad juris ſcientiam, ſive ad eloquentiæ ſtudium inclinaſſet, id univerſum hauriret. In Dial. de Orator. ſive de cauſſis corruptæ eloquentiæ.

to beſtow, in a word, life and ſoul upon a piece of canvas, ſo as to impoſe upon our ſenſes, and make us cry out with the poet, in a fit of wonder and amazement,

Non vide me' di me chi vide il vero:

He ſees not better, nature's ſelf who ſees.

CHAP. I.

OF THE FIRST EDUCATION OF A PAINTER.

IT would be madneſs to place a boy, who after repeated trials, hath diſcovered a natural genius for Painting, in the uſual track of ſtudy, and ſend him, with the common herd of children, to the Latin ſchool. Inſtead of Latin, he ſhould be made to learn thoroughly the rudiments of his own tongue; and inſtead of Cicero's epiſtles, he ſhould be made to read Borghini, Baldinucci, Vaſari. This method would be attended with two advantages; one, that of rendering him maſter of his mother tongue; and thereby freeing him from the diſagreeable neceſſity, under which many very celebrated painters have laboured, of having recourſe to the pen of others, even to write their letters; the other, that of enriching his mind, at the ſame time, with ſeveral branches of knowledge uſeful to one of his profeſſion. Beſides, the frequent mention made in theſe books, of

of the great eſteem in which Painting has been held by men in the higheſt ſpheres of life, by the Maſters of the world; and of the great honours and rewards conferred by them, in every age, on the profeſſors of that art, could not but prove a moſt powerful incentive to the zeal and diligence of a young painter.

It is not a matter of ſo little importance, as ſome are, perhaps, apt to imagine, upon what drawings a pupil is firſt put to exerciſe his talents. Let the firſt profiles, the firſt hands, the firſt feet given him to copy, be of the beſt maſters, ſo as to bring his eye and his hand early acquainted with the moſt elegant forms, and the moſt beautiful proportions (4). A youth, employed in copying the work of a middling painter, in order to proceed afterwards to ſomething of Raphael's, having ſaid in the hearing of a maſter, that he did it in order to bring his hand in; the maſter as ſenſibly as wittily replied, "ſay rather, to put it out." A painter, who has early acquired a fine ſtile, finds it an eaſy matter to give dignity to the mean-

(4) Stultiſſimum credo ad imitandum non optima quæque proponere. Plin. Lib. I. Epiſt. v.

Et natura tenaciſſimi ſumus eorum, quæ rudibus annis percipimus, ut ſapor, quo nova imbuas, durat, nec lanarum colores, quibus ſimplex ille candor mutatus eſt, elui poſſunt, & hæc ipſa magis pertinaciter hærent, quæ deteriora ſunt. Nam bona facile mutantur in pejus: nunc quando in bonum verteris vitia? Quintil. Inſtit. Orat. Lib. I. Cap. i.

Frangas citius quam corrigas quæ in pravum induruerunt. Id. ibid. Cap. iii.

eſt features, while even the works of a Praxiteles or a Glicon are ſure to ſuffer in the hands of another. A veſſel will ever retain the ſcent, which it has firſt contracted.

It would be proper alſo to make the pupil copy ſome fine heads from the Greek and Roman medals, not ſo much for the reaſons juſt now laid down, as to make him acquainted, if I may uſe the expreſſion, with thoſe perſonages, which in time he may have occaſion to introduce into his pieces; and, above all, to improve him early in the art of copying from relief. Hence he will learn the rationale of light and ſhade, and the nature of that *chiaroſcuro*, by which it is, properly ſpeaking, that the various forms of things are diſtinguiſhed. To this it is owing, that a boy will profit more by drawing after things in relief, though but meanly executed, than by copying the moſt excellent drawings. But, whatever he does, care ſhould be taken to make him do it with delight, and finiſh it in the moſt accurate manner. Nothing in the world is ſo neceſſary as diligence, eſpecially at the firſt entrance upon any ſtudy. Nor muſt He ever expect to have the compaſſes in his eye, who has not firſt had them for a long time in his hand.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

OF ANATOMY.

TO aſk if the ſtudy of Anatomy is requiſite to a painter, is the ſame thing as to aſk if, in order to learn any ſcience, a man muſt firſt make himſelf acquainted with the principles of it. It would be throwing away time to cite, in confirmation of this truth, the authorities of the ancient maſters, and the moſt celebrated ſchools. A man, who is not acquainted with the form and conſtruction of the ſeveral bones which ſupport and govern the human frame, and does not know in what manner the muſcles moving theſe bones are fixed to them, can make nothing of what appears of them through the integuments with which they are covered; and which appearance is, however, the nobleſt object of the pencil. It is impoſſible for a painter to copy faithfully what he ſees, unleſs he thoroughly underſtands it. Let him employ ever ſo much time and ſtudy in the attempt, it cannot but be attended with many and great miſtakes; juſt as it muſt happen to a man, who undertakes to copy ſomething in a language which he does not underſtand, or to tranſlate into his own, what has been written in another upon a ſubject, with which he is not acquainted.

IT ſeldom happens, that nothing more is required of a painter than to copy exactly an

object which he has before him. In ſtill and very languid attitudes, in which every member is to appear motionleſs and dead, a living model may, no doubt, yield for a long time a faithful image, and prove an uſeful pattern to him. But in regard to geſtures any way ſudden, motions any way violent, or thoſe momentary attitudes which it is more frequently the painter's buſineſs to expreſs, the caſe is quite different. In theſe a living model can hold but an inſtant or two; it ſoon grows languid, and ſettles into a fixed attitude, which is produced by an inſtantaneous concourſe of the animal ſpirits. If, therefore, a painter poſſeſſes not ſo thoroughly all the principles of Anatomy, as to be at all times able to have immediate recourſe to them; if he knows not the various manners in which the ſeveral parts of the human body play, according to their various poſitions; living models, far from proving an uſeful pattern to him, will rather tend to lead him aſtray, and make him loſe ſight of truth and nature, by exhibiting the very reverſe of what is required, or at leaſt exhibiting it in a very faint and imperfect manner. In living models we often behold thoſe parts ſlow which ſhould be very quick; thoſe cold and torpid, which ſhould have the greateſt ſhare of life and ſpirit in them.

Nor is it, as ſome may be apt to imagine, merely to repreſent athletic and vigorous bodies, in which the parts are moſt bold and determined, that Anatomy is requiſite: It ſhould be underſtood, to repreſent perſons of the moſt delicate frame

frame and conſtitution, even women and children, whoſe members are ſmootheſt and roundeſt, though the parts made known by it are not to be ſtrongly expreſſed in ſuch ſubjects; juſt as Logic is equally requiſite under the poliſhed inſinuations of the orator, and the rough arguments of the philoſopher.

But it is needleſs to ſpend much time in proving, that a painter ſhould be acquainted with Anatomy; or in ſhewing, how far his acquaintance with it ſhould extend. For inſtance, it is unneceſſary for him to enter into the different ſyſtems of the nerves; blood veſſels, bowels, and the like; parts, which are far removed from the ſight, and which therefore may be left to the ſurgeon and the phyſician; as being a guide in the operations of the former, and in the preſcriptions of the latter. It is enough for the painter to be acquainted with the ſkeleton: in other words, with the figure and connexion of the bones, which are, in a manner, the pillars and props of the human body; the origin, progreſs, and ſhape of the muſcles, which cover theſe bones; as alſo the different degrees in which nature has cloathed the muſcles with fat: for this ſubſtance lies thicker upon them in ſome places than in others. Above all, he ſhould know, in what manner the muſcles effect the various motions and geſtures of the body. A muſcle is compoſed of two tendinous and ſlender parts, one called the head, the other the tail, both terminating at the bones; and of an inter-

mediate part, called the belly. The action of a muſcle conſiſts in an extraordinary ſwelling of this intermediate part, while the head remains at reſt, ſo as to bring the tail nearer to the head, and conſequently the part, to which the tail of the muſcle is fixed, nearer to that part into which the head of it is inſerted.

THERE are many motions, to effect which ſeveral of the muſcles (for this reaſon called co-operating muſcles) muſt ſwell and operate together, while thoſe calculated to effect a contrary motion (and therefore called antagoniſt muſcles) appear ſoft and flaccid. Thus, for example, the biceps and the brachiæus internus labour, when the arm is to be bent, and become more prominent than uſual, while the gemellus, the brachiæus externus, and the anconæus, whoſe office is to extend the arm, continue, as it were, flat and idle. The ſame happens reſpectively in all the other motions of the body. When the antagoniſt muſcles of any part operate at one and the ſame time, ſuch part becomes rigid and motionleſs. This action of the muſcles is called tonic.

MICHAEL Angelo intended to have given the public a complete treatiſe upon this ſubject; and it is no ſmall misfortune, that he never accompliſhed ſo uſeful a deſign. This great man, having obſerved, as we are told in his life by Condivi, that Albert Durer was deficient on the ſubject, as treating only of the various meaſures and forms of bodies, without ſaying a word of

their

their attitudes and geſtures, though things of much greater importance, reſolved to compoſe a theory, founded upon his long practice, for the ſervice of all future painters and ſtatuaries. And, certainly, no one could be better qualified to give anatomical precepts for that purpoſe, than he, who, in competition with da Vinci, deſigned that famous cartoon of naked bodies, which was ſtudied by Raphael himſelf, and afterwards obtained the approbation of the Vatican, the greateſt ſchool of the art we are now treating of.

THE want of Michael Angelo's precepts may, in ſome meaſure, be ſupplied by other books written on the ſame ſubject by Moro, Ceſio, and Tortebat; and lately by Bouchardon, one of the moſt famous ſtatuaries in France. But nothing can be of equal ſervice to a young painter, with the leſſons of ſome able diſſector, under whom, in a few months, he may make himſelf maſter of every branch of anatomy which he need to be acquainted with. A courſe of oſteology is of no great length: and of the infinite number of muſcles diſcovered by curious Myologiſts, there are not above eighty or ninety, with which nature ſenſibly operates all thoſe motions, which he can ever have occaſion to imitate or expreſs. Theſe, indeed, he ſhould cloſely ſtudy; theſe he ſhould carefully ſtore up in his memory, ſo as never to be at the leaſt loſs for their proper figure, ſituation, office, and motion.

But there is another thing beſides the diſſection of dead bodies, by which a young painter may profit greatly; and that is, anatomical caſts. Of theſe we have numbers by ſeveral authors; nay ſome, which paſs under the name of Buonarroti himſelf. But there is one, in which, above all the reſt, the parts are moſt diſtinctly and lively expreſſed. This is the performance of Hercules Lelli, who has, perhaps, gone greater lengths in this kind of ſtudy than any other maſter. We have, beſides, by the ſame able hand, ſome caſts of particular parts of the human body, ſo curiouſly coloured for the uſe of young painters, as to repreſent theſe parts exactly as they appear on removing the integuments; and thus, by the difference in their colour as well as configuration, render the tendinous and the fleſhy parts, the belly and the extremities, of every muſcle ſurpriſingly diſtinct; at the ſame time that, by the various direction of the fibres, the motion and play of theſe muſcles become very obvious; a work of the greateſt uſe, and never enough to be commended! Perhaps, indeed, it would be an improvement, to give the muſcles various tints; thoſe muſcles eſpecially, which the pupil might be apt to miſtake for others. For example, though the maſtoides, the deltoides, the ſartorius, the faſcia lata, the gaſterocnemji, are, of themſelves, ſufficently diſtinguiſhable, it is not ſo with regard to the muſcles of the arm and of the back, the right muſcles of the belly, and ſome others, which, either on account of the many

many parts into which they branch, or of their being interwoven one with another, do not ſo clearly and fairly preſent themſelves to the eye. But let the cauſe of confuſion to young beginners be what it will, it may be effectually removed by giving, as I have already hinted, different colours to the different muſcles, and illumining anatomical figures, in the ſame manner that maps are, in order to enable us readily to diſtinguiſh the ſeveral provinces of every kingdom, and the ſeveral dominions of every Prince.

The better to underſtand the general effect, and remember the number, ſituation, and play of the muſcles, it will be proper to compare, now and then, the anatomical caſts, and even the dead body itſelf, with the living body covered with its fat and ſkin; and, above all things, with the Greek ſtatues ſtill in being. It was the peculiar happineſs of the Greeks, to be able to characterize and expreſs the ſeveral parts of the human body much better, than we can pretend to do; and this, on account of their particular application to the ſtudy of naked figures (5), eſpecially the fine living ones, which they had continually before their eyes. It is well known, that the muſcles moſt uſed are likewiſe the moſt protuberant and conſpi-

(5) Græca res eſt nihil velare; at contra Romana ac militaris, thoraca addere. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXIV. Cap. v.

That art, which challenges criticiſm, muſt always be ſuperior to that which ſhuns it. Webb's Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting.

cuous;

cuous; ſuch as, in thoſe who dance much, the muſcles of the legs, and in boatmen the muſcles of the back and arms. But the bodies of the Grecian youth, by means of their conſtant exertion of them in all the gymnaſtic ſports, were ſo thoroughly exerciſed, as to ſupply the ſtatuary with much more perfect models, than ours can pretend to be. It is not to be doubted, but that, for the ſame reaſon, the Greek painters attained the higheſt degree of perfection in the figures of thoſe pieces of theirs ſo much cried up by ancient authors; and it is a great pity, that we have not even thoſe copies of nature to direct our ſtudies. For the faults obſervable in the ancient paintings, which have been dug up in great numbers, eſpecially within theſe few years, do not ſo much tend to prove that the Greeks were any way deficient in this art, as the pieces themſelves, taken all together, that they had carried it to the higheſt degree of perfection. For, if in pictures drawn upon walls, which it was therefore impoſſible to reſcue from fire (6), and in little country towns, and at a time when the art was at its loweſt

(6) Sed nulla gloria artificum eſt, niſi eorum qui tabulas pinxere: eoque venerabilior apparet antiquitas. Non enim parietes excolebant dominis tantum, nec domus uno in loco manſuras, quæ ex incendiis rapi non poſſent. Caſula Protogenes contentus erat in hortulo ſuo. Nulla in Apellis tectoriis pictura erat. Omnis eorum ars urbibus excubabat, pictorque res communis terrarum erat. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. x.

ebb

ebb (7), there appears, in the opinion of the beſt judges ſuch excellence of deſign, colouring, and compoſition, that one would be apt to attribute moſt of them to the ſchool of Raphael; what muſt we think of the pictures drawn at an earlier period, by their ableſt maſters, and for their moſt flouriſhing cities and moſt powerful monarchs; of pictures admired ina country like Greece, where every art was brought to ſuch a degree of perfection, that no

(7) Difficile enim dictu eſt, quænam cauſſa ſit, cur ea, quæ maxime ſenſus noſtros impellunt voluptate, et ſpecie prima acerrime commovent, ab iis celerrime faſtidio quodam et ſatietate abalienemur. Quanto colorum pulchritudine, et varietate floridiora ſunt in picturis novis pleraque, quam in veteribus? quæ tamen etiamſi primo adſpectu nos ceperunt, diutius non delectant; cum iidemnos in antiquis tabulis illo ipſo horrido, obſoletoque teneamur. Quanto molliores ſunt, et delicatiores in cantu flexiones, et falſæ voculæ, quam certæ, et ſeveræ? quibus tamen non modo auſteri, ſed ſi ſæpius fiunt, multitudo ipſa reclamat. Cic. de Oratore, Lib. III. Art. xxv.

Ινα δὲ μᾶλλον ἡ διαφορὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν γένηται καταφανὴς, εἰκόνι χρήσομαι τῶν ὁραθέντων τινι. εἰ δή τινες ἀρχαῖαι γραφαὶ χρώμασιν εἰργασμέναι ἁπλῶς, καὶ ὀυδεμίαν ἐν τοῖς μίγμασιν ἔχουσαι ποικιλίαν, ἀκριβεῖς δὲ ταῖς γραμμαῖς, καὶ πολὺ τὸ χάριεν ἐν τούταις ἔχουσαι, αἱ δὲ μετ' ἐκείνας εὐγραμμαι μὲν ἧττον, ἐξειργασμέναι δὲ μᾶλλον, σκιᾷ τε καὶ φωτὶ ποικιλλόμεναι, καὶ ἐν τῷ πλήθει τῶν μιγμάτων τὴν ἰσχὺν ἔχουσαι τούτων μεν δὴ ταῖς ἀρχαιοτέραις ἔοικεν ὁ Λυσιας καθὰ τὴν ἁπλότητα καὶ τὴν χαριν· ταῖς δὲ ἐκπεπονημέναις τε καὶ τεχνικωτέραις ὁ Ἰσαῖος. Dion. Halicarn. in Judicio de Iſaeo, Art. iv.

Vel quum Pauſiaca torpes inſane tabella,
Subtilis veterum judex & callidus audis.
Horat. Lib. II. Sat. vii.

paſſion

paſſion could reſiſt their muſic, no ſentiments eſcape their mimick arts; of pictures cried up by a Pliny, the ſoundneſs of whoſe judgment in matters of this kind diſplays itſelf in ſo many paſſages

Sed hæc quæ a veteribus ex veris rebus exempla ſumebantur, nunc iniquis moribus improbantur. Nam pinguntur tectoriis monſtra potius, quam ex rebus finitis imagines certæ . . . . . Sed quare vincat veritatem ratio falſa, non erit alienum exponere. Quod enim antiqui inſumentes laborem & induſtriam, probare contendebant artibus, id nunc coloribus, & eorum eleganti ſpecie conſequuntur: & quam ſubtilitas artificis adjiciebat operibus autoritatem, nunc dominicus ſumptus efficit ne deſideretur. Quis enim antiquorum, non uti medicamento, minio parce videtur uſus eſſe? At nunc paſſim plerumque toti parietes inducuntur. Accedit huc chryſocolla, oſtrum, armenium: hæc vero cum inducuntur, etſi non ab arte ſunt poſita, fulgentes tamen oculorum reddunt viſus & ideo quod pretioſa ſunt legibus excipiuntur, ut a domino, non a redemptore repræſententur. Vitruv. Lib. VII. Cap. v.

Et inter hæc pinacothecas veteribus tabulis
confuunt . . . . . .
Artes deſidia perdidit.

C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. ii.

Hactenus dictum ſit de dignitate artis morientis.

Id. ibid. Cap. v.

Nunc & purpuris in parietes migrantibus, & India conferente fluminum ſuorum limum, & draconum & elephantorum ſaniem, nulla nobilis pictura eſt. Id. ibid. Cap. vii.

Erectus his ſermonibus conſulere prudentiorem cœpi ætates tabularum, & quædam argumenta mihi obſcura, ſimulque cauſſam deſidiæ præſentis excutere, cur pulcherrimæ artes periiſſent, inter quas pictura ne minimum quidem ſui veſtigium reliquiſſet. T. Petronii Satyr. Cap. lxxxviii.

of

of his works (8); collected at ſuch expence by Julius Cæſar (9), of whoſe fine taſte the works compoſed by him, and ſtill extant, are a moſt inconteſtable proof. But what evinces ſtill better the excellence of the ancients in painting, is that to which they arrived in ſtatuary, her ſiſter art. Both daughters of deſign, they both enjoyed in common the ſame models, which, more perfect in the happy climate of Greece than in any other part of the globe, muſt have been of as great ſervice to the Apelles' and the Zeuxis', in the drawing of their figures, as they were to the Apollonius's, the Glycons, and the Agaſies, in carving thoſe ſtatues, which the world has ſtill the happineſs of poſſeſſing. Theſe maſters, being beſides aſſiſted by a proper inſight into anatomy, and thoroughly acquainted with the various play of the muſcles according to the various attitudes of the body, and with the different degrees of ſtrength with which each particular muſcle was to be expreſſed in each particular attitude, were thereby enabled to give truth motion, and life, to all their works.

(8) Sicut in Laocoonte, qui eſt in Titi Imperatoris domo, opus omnibus & picturæ & ſtatuariæ artis præponendum. Ex uno lapide eum, & liberos, draconumque mirabiles nexus de conſilii ſententia fecere ſummi artifices, Ageſander, & Polydorus, & Athenodorus Rhodii, &c.

C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXVI. Cap. v.

(9) Gemmas, toreumata, ſigna, tabulas operis antiqui ſemper animoſiſſime comparaſſe.

Sueton. in C. Jul. Cæſare Cap. xlvii.

THERE

THERE are a great many exerciſes, which a young painter ſhould go through while engaged in the ſtudy of anatomy, in order to make himſelf more thoroughly maſter of that ſcience. For example: the thighs of any figure, a Laocoon for inſtance, being given, he ſhould add to them legs ſuitable to that ſtate, in which the muſcles of the thighs are repreſented; I mean, the muſcles which ſerve to bend and extend the legs, and to effectuate in them ſuch a preciſe poſition and no other. To the ſimple contour of an anatomy, or a ſtatue, he ſhould add the parts included by it, and give it a ſyſtem of muſcles conformable to the quality of that particular contour; for every contour denotes ſome one certain attitude, motion, exertion; and no other. Exerciſes of this kind would ſoon eſtabliſh him in the moſt fundamental principles of painting, eſpecially if he had an opportunity of comparing his drawings with the ſtatue or caſt, from which the parts given him to work upon were taken, and thereby diſcovering and correcting his miſtakes. This method is very like that uſed by thoſe who teach the Latin tongue; when, having given their ſcholars a paſſage of Livy or Cæſar already tranſlated into their mother tongue, to tranſlate back into Latin, they make them compare their work with the original text.

CHAP. III.

OF PERSPECTIVE.

THE ſtudy of Perſpective ſhould go hand in hand with that of Anatomy, as not leſs fundamental and neceſſary. In fact, the contour of an object drawn upon paper or canvas, repreſents nothing more than ſuch an interſection of the viſual rays ſent from the extremities of it to the eye, as would ariſe on a glaſs put in the place of the paper or canvas. Now, the ſituation of an object at the other ſide of a glaſs being given, the delineation of it on the glaſs itſelf depends entirely on the ſituation of the eye on this ſide of the glaſs, that is to ſay, on the rules of Perſpective; a ſcience, which, contrary to the opinion of moſt people, extends much farther than the painting of ſcenes, floors, and what generally goes under the name of Quadratura. Perſpective, according to that great maſter da Vinci, is to be conſidered as the reins and rudder of Painting. It teaches in what proportion the parts fly from, and leſſen upon, the eye; how figures are to be marſhalled upon a plain ſurface, and foreſhortened. It contains, in ſhort, the whole rationale of deſign.

SUCH are the terms, which the maſters, beſt grounded in their profeſſion, have employed to define and commend perſpective; ſo far were they from calling it a fallacious art, and an in-

ſidious

ſidious guide; as ſome amongſt the moderns have not bluſhed to do, inſiſting that it is to be followed no longer than it keeps the high road, or leads by eaſy and pleaſant paths (1.) But theſe writers plainly ſhew, that they are equally ignorant of the nature of perſpective, which, founded as it is on geometrical principles, can never lead its votaries aſtray, and of the nature of their art, which without the aſſiſtance of perſpective, cannot, in rigour, expect to make any progreſs, nay, not ſo much as delineate a ſimple contour.

THOSE, too, who would perſuade us, that the ancient maſters of Greece knew nothing of perſpective, ſhew, that they themſelves know little or nothing of painting. They allege, as a proof of this their idle aſſertion, that the rules of perſpective are violated in moſt of the ancient pictures that have reached us; as though the miſtakes and blunders of middling artiſts were a ſufficient ground for calling in queſtion the merit of others, who were allowed to excel in their profeſſion.

(1) Regula certa licet nequeat Proſpectica dici,
Aut Complementum Graphidos; ſed in Arte Juvamen,
Et modus accelerans operandi, at corpora falſo
Sub viſu in multis referens, mendoſa labaſcit:
Nam Geometralem nunquam ſunt corpora juxta
Menſuram depicta oculis, ſed qualia viſa:
Du Freſnoy de Arte Graphica.

See the annotations of Monſieur de Piles on theſe lines, and every other modern treatiſe.

profeſſion. Now, not to inſiſt on the abſurdity of ſuch a ſuppoſition, which we have already expoſed, Pamphilus, the maſter of Apelles, and the founder of the nobleſt ſchool of all Greece, has affirmed in the moſt expreſs terms, that, without geometry, painting muſt fall to the ground (2.) It is well known, beſides, that the ancients practiſed the art of painting in perſpective upon walls, in the ſame way that it is now done by the moderns (3); and that one of the walls of the theatre of Claudius Pulcher, repreſenting a roof covered with tiles, was finiſhed in ſo maſterly a manner that the rooks, a bird of no ſmall ſagacity, taking it for a real roof, often attempted to alight upon it (4).

(2) Ipſe (Pamphilus) Macedo natione, ſed primus in pictura omnibus litteris eruditus, præcipue Arithmeticæ, & Geometricæ, ſine quibus negabat artem perfici poſſe. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. x.

(3) Ex eo antiqui, qui initia expolitionibus inſtituerunt, imitati ſunt primum cruſtarum marmorearum varietates & collocationes, deinde coronarum, & ſilaceorum, miniaceorumque cuneorum inter ſe varias diſtributiones. Poſtea ingreſſi ſunt, ut etiam ædificiorum figuras, columnarumque, & faſtigiorum eminentes projecturas imitarentur: patentibus autem locis, uti exedris, propter amplitudinem parietum, ſcenarum frontes Tragico more, aut Comico, ſeu ſatyrico deſignarent. Vitruv. Lib. VII. Cap. v.

(4) Habuit & ſcena ludis Claudii Pulcri magnam admirationem picturæ, cum ad tegularum ſimilitudinem corvi decepti imagine advolarent. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. iv.

We

We are likewiſe told, that a dog was deceived to ſuch a degree, by certain ſteps in a perſpective of Dento's, that, expecting to find a free paſſage, he made up to them in full ſpeed, and daſhed out his brains; thus immortaliſing by his death the pencil of the artiſt, which had been the occaſion of it. But, what is ſtill more, Vitruvius tells us in expreſs terms, by whom, and at what time this art was invented. It was firſt practiſed by Agatharcus, a contemporary of Æſchylus, in the theatre of Athens; and afterwards reduced to certain principles, and treated as a ſcience by Anaxagoras and Democritus (5); thus faring like all other arts, which exiſted in practice before they appeared in theory. The thing, I think, may be thus accounted for. Some painter, who happened to be a very accurate obſerver of nature, firſt exactly repreſented thoſe effects which he ſaw conſtantly attend the images offered to our eyes by exterior objects; and theſe effects came after-

(5) Namque primum Agatharchus Athenis Æſchylo docente tragœdiam, ſcenam fecit, & de eo commentarium reliquit. Ex eo moniti Democritus & Anaxagoras, de eadem re ſcripſerunt, quemadmodum oporteat ad aciem oculorum radiorumque extenſionem, certo loco centro conſtituto ad lineas ratione naturali reſpondere: uti de incerta re certæ imagines ædificiorum in ſcenarum picturis redderent ſpeciem: & quæ in directis planiſque frontibus ſint figuratæ, alia abſcedentia, alia prominentia eſſe videantur. Vitruv. in Præf. Lib. VII. You may likewiſe conſult Diſcours ſur la Perſpective de l'ancienne peinture ou ſculpture, par Mr. l'Abbé Sallier. Tom. viii. Memoires de l'Academie des Inſcriptions.

wards

wards to be demonſtrated by geometricians as ſo many neceſſary conſequences, and reduced to certain theorems: juſt as from thoſe chef d'œuvres of the human mind, the Iliad of Homer and the OEdipus of Sophocles, both built on the moſt accurate obſervations of nature, Ariſtotle found means to extract the rules and precepts contained in his art of poetry. It is therefore clear, that, ſo early as the age of Pericles, perſpective was reduced into a compleat ſcience; which no longer continued confined to the theatre, but made its way into the ſchools of painting, as an art not leſs neceſſary to painters in general, than it had been found to ſcene-painters in particular. Pamphilus, who founded in Sicion the moſt flouriſhing ſchool of deſign, taught it publickly: And from the time of Apelles, Protogenes, and the other bright luminaries of painting amongſt the ancients, it was practiſed by the Greek painters, in the ſame manner that it was, ſo many ages after, by Bellini, Pietro Perugino, and others, down to the days of Titian, Raphael, and Correggio, who put the laſt hand to painting, and gave it all that perfection it was capable of receiving.

Now, a painter having formed a ſcene in his mind, and ſuppoſed, as is cuſtomary, that the capital figures of this ſcene lie cloſe, or almoſt cloſe to the back of his canvas, he is, in the next place, to fix upon ſome point on this ſide of the canvas, from which he would chuſe his piece ſhould be ſeen. But in chuſing this point, which is called the point of ſight, regard ſhould be had

to

to its ſituation to the right or left of the middle of the canvas; but, above all things, to its diſtance and its height with reſpect to the lower edge of the canvas; which edge is called the baſe line, and is parallel to the horizontal line that paſſes through the eye. For by aſſuming the point of ſight, and conſequently the horizontal line, too low, the planes, upon which the figures ſtand, will appear a great deal too ſhallow, as, by aſſuming it too high, they will appear too ſteep, ſo as to render the piece far leſs light and airy than it ought to be. In like manner, if the point of ſight is taken at too great a diſtance from the canvas, the figures will not admit of degradation enough to be ſeen with ſufficient diſtinctneſs; and if taken too near it, the degradation will be too quick and precipitate to have an agreeable effect. Thus, then, it appears, that no ſmall attention is requiſite in the choice of this point.

When a picture is to be placed on high, the point of ſight ſhould be aſſumed low, and vice verſa; in order that the horizontal line of the picture may be, as near as poſſible, in the ſame horizontal plane with that of the ſpectator; for this diſpoſition has an amazing effect. When a picture is to be placed very high, as, amongſt many others, that of the Purification by Paolo Veroneſe, engraved by le Fevre, it will be proper to aſſume the point of ſight ſo low, that it may lie quite under the picture, no part of whoſe ground is, in that caſe, to be viſible; for were the point of ſight to be taken above the picture,

the

the horizontal ground of it would appear ſloping to the eye, and both figures and buildings as ready to tumble head foremoſt. It is true, indeed, that there is ſeldom any neceſſity for ſuch extraordinary exactneſs, and that, unleſs in ſome particular caſes, the point of ſight had better be rather high than low; the reaſon of which is, that, as we are more accuſtomed to behold people on the ſame plane with ourſelves, than either higher or lower, the figures of a piece muſt ſtrike us moſt, when ſtanding on a plane nearly level with that, upon which we ourſelves ſtand. To this it may be added, that by placing the eye low, and greatly ſhortening the plane, the heels of the back figures will ſeem to bear againſt the heads of the foremoſt, ſo as to render the diſtance between them far leſs perceptible than it otherwiſe would be.

THE point of ſight being fixed upon, according to the ſituation in which the picture is to be placed, the point of diſtance is next to be determined. In doing this, a painter ſhould carefully attend to three things: firſt, that the ſpectator may be able to take in, at one glance, the whole and every part of the compoſition; ſecondly, that he may ſee it diſtinctly; and, thirdly, that the degradation of the figures, and other objects of the picture be ſufficiently ſenſible. It would take up too much time to lay down certain and preciſe rules for doing all this, conſidering the great variety in the ſizes and ſhapes of pictures;

for which reaſon I muſt leave a great deal to the diſcretion of the painter.

But there is a point ſtill remaining, which will not admit of the leaſt latitude. This is, the delineation of the picture, when once the point of ſight has been fixed upon. The figures of a picture are to be conſidered as ſo many columns erected on different ſpots of the ſame plane; and the painter muſt not think of deſigning any thing, till he has laid down, in perſpective, all thoſe columns, which are to enter his compoſition, with the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs. By proceeding in this manner, he may not only be ſure of not committing any miſtake in the diminution of his figures, according to their different diſtances, but may flatter himſelf with the thoughts of treading in the ſteps of the greateſt maſters, eſpecially Raphael, in whoſe ſketches (ſuch was his reſpect for the laws of perſpective) we frequently meet with a ſcale of degradation (6). It is to the punctual obſervance of theſe laws, that we are to attribute the grand effect of ſome paintings by Carpazio and Mantegna, ſo careleſs in other reſpects; whereas a ſingle fault againſt them is often ſufficient entirely to ſpoil the works of a Guido, in ſpite of the ſublimity and beauty of his ſuperior ſtile.

Now, as the demonſtration of the rules of Perſpective depends on the doctrine of proportions,

(6) Mr. de Pile. Idée du Peintre parfait, Ch. xix.

on

on the properties of ſimilar triangles, and on the interſection of planes, it will be proper to put an abridgment of Euclid into the hands of the young painter, that he may underſtand theſe rules fundamentally, and not ſtand confined to a blind practice of them: But, then, there is nothing in this author relative to the art of painting, which may not be eaſily acquired in a few months. For, as it would be of no uſe to a painter to launch out into the anatomical depths of a Monro or an Albinus, it would be equally ſuperfluous to perplex himſelf with the intricacies of the higher geometry with a Taylor, who has handled perſpective with that rich profoundneſs, which, I cannot help thinking, does a great deal more honour to a mathematician, than it can poſſibly bring advantage to a ſimple artiſt.

But though a much longer time were requiſite to become a perfect maſter of perſpective, a painter, ſurely, ought not to grudge it, as no time can be too long to acquire that knowledge, without which he cannot poſſibly expect to ſucceed. Nay, I may boldly affirm, that the ſhorteſt road in every art is that which leads through theory to practice. It is from theory that ariſes that great facility, by means of which a man advances the quicker, in proportion as he is ſurer of not taking a wrong ſtep: whilſt thoſe, who are not grounded in the ſcience, labour on in perpetual doubt, obliged, as a certain author expreſſes it, to feel out their way with the pencil, juſt as the blind, with their ſticks, feel for the

ſtreets and turnings, with which they are not acquainted.

As practice, therefore, ought in every thing to be built upon principle, the ſtudy of Opticks, as far as it is requiſite to determine the degree in which objects are to be illuminated or ſhaded, ſhould proceed hand in hand with that of perſpective. And this, in order that the ſhades, caſt by figures upon the planes on which they ſtand, may fall properly, and be neither too ſtrong nor too light; in a word, that thoſe moſt beautiful effects of the chiaroſcuro may run no riſk of ever receiving the lie from truth, which, ſooner or later, diſcovers itſelf to every eye.

CHAP. IV.

OF SYMMETRY.

THE ſtudy of Symmetry, it is obvious, ſhould immediately follow that of Anatomy: for it would avail us little to be acquainted with the different parts of the human body, and their ſeveral offices, were we, at the ſame time, ignorant of the order and proportion of theſe parts in regard to the whole in general, and each other in particular. The Greek ſtatuaries diſtinguiſhed themſelves above all others, as much by the juſt ſymmetry of their members, as by their ſkill in anatomy; but Polycletes ſurpaſſed them all by a ſtatue, called the Rule, from which, as from a moſt accurate pattern, other artiſts might take

take meaſures for every part of the human body (7). Theſe meaſures, to ſay nothing of the books which treat profeſſedly of them, may now be derived from the Apollo of Belvedere, the Laocoon, the Venus of Medicis, the Faunus, and particularly the Antinous, which laſt was the rule of the learned Pouſſin.

NATURE, which in the formation of every ſpecies ſeems to have aimed at the laſt degree of perfection, does not appear to have been equally ſollicitous in the production of individuals. She conſiders, one would think, thoſe things as nothing, which have a beginning and an end, and whoſe exiſtence is of ſo ſhort a duration, that they may be ſaid, in a manner, to come into the world merely to leave it. She ſeems, in ſome ſort, to abandon individuals to ſecond cauſes; and if from them there now and then breaks forth a primitive ray of perfection, it is too ſoon eclipſed by the clouds of imperfection that conſtantly attend it. Now, art ſoars up to the archetypes of nature; collects the flowers of every beauty; which it here and there meets with: combines all the perfect models that come in its way; and propoſes them to men for their imitation (8).

(7) Fecit (Polycletus) & quem Canona artifices vocant, lineamenta Artis ex eo petentes, velut a lege quadam; ſoluſque hominum artem ipſe feciſſe, artis opere judicatur. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXIV. Cap. viii.

(8) And ſince a true knowledge of nature gives us pleaſure,

Thus the painter, who had before him a company of naked Calabrian girls, traced, as la Caſa ingeniouſly expreſſes it (9), the reſpective beauties which they had, as it were, borrowed from one ſingle body; that, by making each of them reſtore to this imaginary form what ſhe had borrowed from it, he might be furniſhed with a complete pattern; rightly imagining, that from ſuch an union, and of ſuch beauties, muſt reſult the beauty of an Helen. This was likewiſe the practice of the ancient ſtatuaries, when about to form in braſs or marble the ſtatues of their Gods or heroes. And, thanks to the hardneſs of theſe materials, ſome of their works, containing united all that poſſible perfection, which could be found ſcattered here and there in individuals, ſubſiſt to this day as patterns not only of exact ſymmetry, but of ſupereminent grandeur in the parts, gracefulneſs and contraſt in the attitudes, nobleneſs in the characters; they ſubſiſt, in ſhort, as paragons

pleaſure, a lively imitation of it, either in Poetry or Painting, muſt of neceſſity produce a much greater. For both theſe arts, as I ſaid before, are not only true imitations of Nature, but of the beſt nature; of that which is wrought up to a nobler pitch. They preſent us with images more perfect than the life in any individual: and we have the pleaſure to ſee all the ſcattered beauties of Nature united, by a happy Chemiſtry, without its deformities or faults. Dryden's Preface to his tranſlation of Du Freſnoy's Art of Painting.

(9) In Galatea.—See alſo the Life of Zeuxis, by Carlo Dati, note xi.

in

in every kind, and the very mirrours of beauty(1). In them we behold precept joined with example; in them we ſee where the great Maſters of Antiquity deviated with a happy boldneſs from the common rules; or rather made them bend to the different characters they were to repreſent. In their Niobe, for inſtance, which was to breathe majeſty like Juno, they have altered ſome parts, that appear more delicate and ſlender in their Venus, the pattern of female beauty. The legs and thighs of the Apollo of Belvidere, by being made ſomewhat longer, than the common proportion of theſe limbs to the reſt of the body ſeems to admit, contribute not a little to give him that eaſe and freedom, which correſpond ſo well with the activity attributed to that deity, as, on the other hand, the extraordinary thickneſs of the neck adds ſtrength to the Farneſian Hercules, and gives him ſomething of a bull-like look and robuſtneſs.

It is the general opinion of painters, that the

(1) Ἦ Θεὸς ἦλθ' ἐπὶ γῆν ἐξ ὐρανοῦ εἰκόνα δείξων,
Φειδία, ἢ συγ' ἔβης τὸν Θεὸν ὀφύμενος. Anthol.

Nec vero ille artifex, cum faceret Jovis formam, aut Minervæ, contemplabatur aliquem, a quo ſimilitudinem duceret, ſed ipſius in mente inſidebat ſpecies pulchritudinis eximia quædam, quam intuens, in eaque defixus, ad illius ſimilitudinem artem & manum dirigebat. Cic. Orator. Art. ii.

Ex ære preter Amazonem ſupra dictam (fecit Phidias) Minervam tam eximiæ pulchritudinis, ut formæ cognomen acceperit. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXIV. Cap. viii.

ancients were not as happy in repreſenting the bodies of children, as they are allowed to have been in repreſenting thoſe of women and men; eſpecially thoſe of their Gods; in which they excelled to ſuch a degree, that with theſe Gods were often worſhipped the artiſts who had carved them (2). Yet the Venus of Gnidus by Praxiteles was not more famous than her Cupid, on whoſe account alone people flocked to Theſpiæ (3). To children, ſay they, the ancients knew not how to impart that ſoftneſs and effeminacy, which Fiammingo has ſince contrived to give them by repreſenting their cheeks, hands and feet ſomewhat ſwelled, their heads large, and with ſcarce any belly. But ſuch Criticks ſeem to forget, that theſe firſt ſketches of nature very ſeldom come in the painter's way, and that this puny and delicate ſtate has not in its form even the leaſt glimmering of perfection. The Ancients never undertook to repreſent children leſs than four or five years old; at which age the ſuper-

(2) προσκυνῶνται γοῦν ὕυτοι μετὰ τῶν θεῶν. Lucian. in Somnio.

(3) Idem, opinor, artifex (Praxiteles) ejuſdem modi Cupidinem fecit illum, qui eſt Theſpiis, propter quem Theſpiæ viſuntur. Nam alia viſendi cauſa nulla eſt. Cic. in Verrem, de Signis.

Αἱ δὲ Θεσπειαὶ πρότερον ἐγνωρίζοντο διὰ τὸν Ἔρωτα τὸν Πραξιτέλους, &c. Strabo, Lib. IX.

Ejuſdem eſt & Cupido objectus a Cicerone Verri: ille propter quem Theſpiæ viſebantur; nunc in Octaviæ ſcholis poſitus. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXVI. Cap. v.

fluous

fluous humours of the body being in ſome meaſure digeſted, their members begin to aſſume ſuch a contour and proportion, as may ſerve to point out, what they are afterwards likely to be. This obſervation is confirmed by the children, which we meet with in ancient baſſo relievos and paintings, for they are all doing one thing or another, like thoſe moſt beautiful little Cupids in a picture at Venice, who are playing with the arms of Mars, and lifting up the ponderous ſword of that Deity; or that little urchin in the Danae of Caracci, who empties a quiver of its arrows, in order to fill it with the golden ſhower. Now, what can be a greater blunder in point of Coſtume than to attribute actions, which require ſome degree of ſtrength and judgment, to infancy, to that raw and tender age, ſo totally unable to govern and ſupport itſelf (4).

Let a young painter conſider the Greek ſtatues ever ſo often, of whatever character or age they may be repreſented, it is impoſſible he ſhould ever conſider them.

Che non ci ſcorga in lor nuova bellezza (5); It is, therefore, impoſſible he ſhould copy them too often, according to that judicious motto placed by Marotti on his Print called the School. This truth was acknowledged by Rubens himſelf; for though, like one bred, as he was, in the fog-

(4) See Bellori in his lives of Fiammingo and Algardi.

(5) Without diſcovering new beauties in them.

gy climate of the Low Countries, he generally painted from the life; in ſome of his works he copied the ancients: Nay, he wrote a treatiſe on the excellency of the ancient ſtatues, and on the duty of a painter to ſtudy and imitate them. As to the ſatirical print or rather paſquinade of the great Titian, in which he has repreſented a parcel of young monkies aping the groupe of Laocoon and his ſons, he intended nothing more by it than to laſh the dulneſs and poverty of thoſe artiſts, who cannot ſo much as draw a figure without having a ſtatue before them as a model.

In fact, reaſon requires, that an artiſt ſhould be ſo much maſter of his art, as ſeldom to ſtand in any need of a pattern. To what other purpoſe is he to ſweat and toil from his infancy, and ſpend ſo many days and nights in ſtudying and copying the beſt models; eſpecially the fineſt faces of antiquity, which we are ſtill poſſeſſed of; ſuch as the two Niobes, mother and daughter; the Ariadne; the Alexander; the young Nero; the Silenus; the Nile; and likewiſe the fineſt figures; for inſtance, The Apollo; the Gladiator; the Venus; and others; all which (as was ſaid of Pietro Feſta,) he ſhould have, as it were, perfectly by heart. With a ſtock of excellencies like theſe, treaſured up in his memory, he may one day hope to produce ſomething of his own without a model; form a right judgment of thoſe natural beauties which fall in his way, and, when an occaſion offers, avail himſelf properly of them.

It is very ill done to ſend boys to an academy to draw after naked figures, before they have imbibed a proper reliſh for beautiful proportions, and have been well grounded in the true principles of ſymmetry. They ſhould firſt learn, by ſtudying the precious remains of antiquity, to improve upon life; and diſcern where a natural figure is faulty through ſtiffneſs in the members, or clumſineſs in the trunk, or in any other reſpect; ſo as to be able to correct the faulty part, and reduce it to its proper bounds. Painting, in this branch, is, like Medicine, the art of taking away and adding.

I must not, however, diſſemble, that the methods, hitherto laid down, are attended with ſome danger; for by too ſlaviſh an attention to ſtatues, the young painter may contract a hard and dry manner; and by ſtudying anatomies too ſervilely, a habit of repreſenting living bodies as ſtripped of their ſkin; for, after all, there is nothing but what is natural, that, beſides a certain peculiar grace and livelineſs, poſſeſſes that ſimplicity, eaſe and ſoftneſs, which is not to be expected in the works of art, or even thoſe of nature when deprived of life (6). Pouſſin himſelf has now and then give into one of theſe extremes, and Michael Angelo very often into the other: But from this we can only infer, that even the greateſt men are not infallible. It is in ſhort to be conſidered as

(6) See the Diſcourſe by Vaſary at the end of his lives.

one

one inſtance, among a thouſand, of the ill uſe thoſe are wont to make of the beſt things, who do not know how to temper and qualify them properly with their contraries.

But no ſuch danger can ariſe to a young painter from confining himſelf for a long time to mere deſign, ſo as not to attempt colouring, till he has made himſelf maſter of that branch. If, according to a great Maſter (6), colours in painting are in regard to the eye, what numbers in poetry are in regard to the ear, ſo many charms to allure and captivate that ſenſe; may we not affirm, that deſign is in the ſame art, what propriety of language is in writing, and a juſt utterance of ſounds in muſic. Whatever ſome people may think, a picture deſigned according to the rules of Perſpective, and the principles of Anatomy, will ever be held in higher eſteem by good judges, than a picture ill deſigned, let it be ever ſo well coloured. Another very able maſter ſet ſo great a value upon the art of contour, that, according to ſome expreſſions of his which have reached us, he conſidered almoſt every thing elſe as nothing in compariſon with it (7). And this his judgment may, I think, be juſtified by conſidering, that Nature, though ſhe forms men of various colours and complexions, never operates in their motions contrary to the mechanical principles of Anatomy,

(6) Pouſſin; in his life by Bellori.

(7) Annibal Caracci uſed to ſay, Buon contorno, e . . . . . in mezzo, Give me a good contour, and fill it as you pleaſe.

nor,

nor, in exhibiting theſe motions to the eye, againſt the geometrical laws of Perſpective; a plain proof, that, in point of deſign, no miſtake is to be deemed trifling. Hence we are enabled to feel all the weight of thoſe words, in which Michael Angelo, after he had conſidered a picture drawn by the Prince of the Venetian School, addreſſed Vaſary. "What a pity it is, ſaid he, that this man did not ſet out by ſtudying deſign (8)." As the energy of nature ſhines moſt in the ſmalleſt ſubjects, ſo the energy of art ſhines moſt in imitating them.

CHAP. V.

OF COLOURING.

IT muſt likewiſe be of great ſervice to a painter deſirous to excel in colouring, to be well acquainted with that part of Opticks, which has the nature of light and colours for its object. Light, however ſimple and uncompounded it may appear, is nevertheleſs made up, as it were, of ſeveral diſtinct ſubſtances; and the number, and even doſe, of theſe ingredients has been happily diſcovered by the moderns. Every undivided ray, let it be ever ſo fine, is a little bundle of red, orange,

(8) Vaſari, in the life of Titian. Which made Tintoret ſay, that now and then Titian did ſome things which could not be done better; but that ſome others might have been better deſigned. Ridolfi nella vita di Tiziani.

yellow,

yellow, green, azure, indigo, and violet, rays, which, while combined, are not to be diſtinguiſhed one from another, and form that kind of light called white; ſo that white is not a colour *per ſe*, as the learned da Vinci (ſo far, it ſeems, the precurſor of Newton) expreſsly affirms, but an aſſemblage of colours (9). Now, theſe colours, which compoſe light, though immutable in themſelves, and endued with various qualities, are continually, however, ſeparating from each other in their reflection from, and paſſage through, other ſubſtances, and thus become manifeſt to the eye. Graſs, for example, reflects only green rays, or rather reflects green rays in greater number than it does thoſe of any other colour; and one kind of wine tranſmits red rays, and another yellowiſh rays; and from this kind of ſeparation ariſes that variety of colours, with which Nature has diverſified her various productions. Man too has contrived to ſeparate the rays of light by making a portion of the ſun's beams paſs through a glaſs priſm; for, after paſſing through it, they appear divided into ſeven pure and primitive colours, placed, in ſucceſſion, one by the other, like ſo many colours on a painter's pallet.

Now, though Titian, Correggio, and Vandike, have been excellent colouriſts, without knowing any thing of theſe phyſical ſubtleties, that is no reaſon why others ſhould neglect them. For it cannot but be of great ſervice to a painter to be

(9) Trattato della Pittura, Cap. civ.

well

well acquainted with the nature of what he is to imitate, and of thoſe colours, with which he is to give life and perfection to his deſigns; not to ſpeak of the pleaſure there is, in being able to account truely and ſolidly for the various effects and appearances of light. From a due tempering, for example, and degrading of the tints in a picture, from making colours partake of each other, according to the reflection of light from one object to another, there ariſes, in ſome meaſure, that ſublime harmony, which may be conſidered as the true muſick of the eye. And this harmony has its foundation in the genuine principles of Opticks. Now, this could not happen in the ſyſtem of thoſe philoſophers, who held that colours did not originally exiſt in light, but were, on the contrary, nothing more than ſo many modifications, which it underwent in reflecting from, or paſſing through, other ſubſtances; thus ſubject to alterations without end, and every moment liable to periſh. Were that the caſe, bodies could no more receive any hues one from another, nor this body partake of the colour of that, than ſcarlet, for example, becauſe it has the power of changing into red all the rays of the ſun or ſky which immediately fall upon it, has the power of changing into red all the other rays reflected to it, from a blue or any other colour in its neighbourhood. Whereas, allowing that colours are, in their own nature, immutable one into another, and that every body reflects more or leſs every ſort of coloured rays, though

thoſe

thoſe rays in greateſt number, which are of the colour it exhibits, there muſt neceſſarily ariſe, in colours placed near one another, certain particular hues, or temperaments of colour. Nay, this influence of one colour upon another may be ſo far traced, that, three or four bodies of different colours, and likewiſe the intenſeneſs of the light falling upon each being aſſigned, we may eaſily determine in what ſituations and how much they would tinge each other. We may thus, too, by the ſame principles of Opticks, account for ſeveral other things practiced by painters; inſomuch that a perſon, who has carefully obſerved natural effects, with an eye directed by ſolid learning, ſhall be able to form general rules, where another can only diſtinguiſh particular caſes.

But, after all, the pictures of the beſt colouriſts are, it is univerſally allowed, the books, in which a young painter muſt chiefly look for the rules of colouring; that is, of that branch of painting, which contributes ſo much to expreſs the beauty of objects, and is ſo requiſite to repreſent them as what they really are. Giorgone and Titian ſeem to have diſcovered circumſtances in nature, which others have entirely overlooked; and the laſt, in particular, has been happy enough to expreſs them with a pencil as delicate, as his eye was quick and piercing. In his works we behold that ſweetneſs of colouring which is produced by union; that beauty which is conſiſtent truth; and all the inſenſible tranſmutations, all the ſoft tranſitions, in a word, all the pleaſing

modulations,

modulations, of tints and colours (1). When a young painter has, by cloſe application, acquired from Titian, whom he can never ſufficiently dwell upon, that art, which, of all painters, he has beſt contrived to hide, he would do well to turn to Baſſano and Paolo, on account of the beauty, boldneſs, and elegance of their touches. That richneſs, ſoftneſs, and freſhneſs of colouring, for which the Lombard School is ſo juſtly cried up, may likewiſe be of great ſervice to him. Nor will he reap leſs benefit by ſtudying the principles and practice of the Flemmiſh School, which, chiefly by means of her varniſhes, has contrived to give a moſt enchanting luſtre and tranſparency to her colours. For, though we ſhould agree with a certain ingenious Engliſh writer, that it belongs only to the Italians to draw beauty well (2), we are not bound to think, with a

(1) In quo diverſi niteant cum mille colores,
Tranſitus ipſe tamen ſpectantia lumina fallit,
Uſque adeo quod tangit idem eſt, tamen ultima diſtant. Ovid. Metam. Lib. VI.

Come procede innanzi dall' ardore
Per lo papiro ſuſo un color bruno,
Che non è nero ancora, e'l bianco muore.

As, in burning paper, a brown colour ſeparates the black from the white, though at its extremities it cannot be diſtinguiſhed from either the black or white. Dante Inf. Cant. xxv.

(2) In homely pieces e'en the Dutch excell,
Italians only can draw beauty well.
D. of Buckingh. on Mr. Hobbes.

cer-

certain ancient poet, that a Flemmiſh complexion is any diſgrace to a Roman countenance (3).

But whatever pictures a young painter may chuſe to ſtudy the art of colouring upon, he muſt take great care that they are well preſerved. There are very few pieces, which have not ſuffered more or leſs by the length, not to ſay the injuries, of time; and, perhaps, that precious patina, which years alone can impart to paintings, is in ſome meaſure a-kin to that other kind, which ages alone impart to medals; inaſmuch as, by giving teſtimony to their antiquity, it renders them proportionably beautiful in the ſuperſtitious eyes of the learned. It muſt, indeed, be allowed, that, if, on the one hand, this patina beſtows, as it really does, an extraordinary degree of harmony upon the colours of a picture, and deſtroys, or at leaſt greatly leſſens, their original rawneſs it, on the other hand, equally impairs the freſhneſs and life of them. A piece, ſeen many years after it has been painted, appears much as it would do, immediately after painting, behind a dull glaſs. It is no idle opinion, that Paolo Veroneſe, attentive above all things to the beauty of his colours, and what is called ſtrepito (4), left entirely to time the care of harmonizing them perfectly, and (as we may ſay) mellowing them. But moſt of the

(3) Turpis Romano Belgicus ore color.
Proper. Lib. II. Eleg. xvii.

(4.) The literal meaning of this word is, crackling.

old

old maſters took that taſk upon themſelves, and never expoſed their works to the eyes of the Public, until they had ripened and finiſhed them with their own hands. And who can ſay, whether the Chriſt of Moneta and the Nativity of Baſſano have been more improved or injured, (if we may ſo ſpeak) by the touchings and retouchings of time, in the courſe of more than two centuries. It is, indeed, impoſſible to be determined. But the ſtudious pupil may make himſelf ample amends for any injuries, which his originals may have received from the hands of time, by turning to truth, and to nature which never grows old, but conſtantly retains its primitive flower of youth, and was itſelf the model of the models before him. As ſoon, therefore, as a young painter has laid a proper foundation for good colouring by ſtudying the beſt maſters, he ſhould turn all his thoughts to truth and nature. And it would, perhaps, be well worth while to have, in the academies of painting, models for colouring as well as for deſigning; that, as from the one the pupils learn to give their due proportion to the ſeveral members and muſcles, they may learn from the other to make their carnations rich and warm, and faithfully copy the different local hues, which appear quite diſtinct in the different parts of a fine body. To illuſtrate ſtill farther the uſe of ſuch a model, let us ſuppoſe it placed in different lights; now in that of the ſun, now in that of the ſky, and now again in that of a lamp or candle;

candle; one time placed in the ſhade, and another in a reflected light. Hence the pupil might learn all the different effects of the complexion in different circumſtances, whether the livid, the lucid, or the tranſparent; and, above all, that variety of tints and half tints, occaſioned in the colour of the ſkin by the epidermis having the bones immediately under it in ſome places, and in others a greater or leſs number of blood-veſſels or quantity of fat. An artiſt, who had long ſtudied ſuch a model, would run no riſk of degrading the beauties of nature by any particularity of ſtile; or of giving into that prepoſterous fullneſs and floridneſs of colour, which is at preſent ſo much the taſte. He would not feed his figures with roſes, as an ancient painter of Greece ſhrewdly expreſſed it, but with good beef; a difference, which the learned eye of a modern writer could perceive between the colouring of Barocci and that of Titian (5). To practiſe in that manner, is, according to a great maſter, no better than inuring one's ſelf to the commiſſion of blunders. What ſtatues are in deſign, nature is in colouring; the fountain-head of that perfection, to which every artiſt, ambitious to excel, ſhould conſtantly

(5.) Opera ejus (Euphranoris) ſunt equeſtre prælium: duodecim dii: Theſeus, in quo dixit eundem apud Parrhaſium roſa paſtum eſſe, ſuum vero carne, Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. xi.

What more could we ſay of Titian and Barocci? Webb, Dial. V.

aſpire;

aſpire; and, accordingly, the Flemmiſh painters, in conſequence of their aiming ſolely to copy nature, are in colouring as excellent, as they are wont to be aukward in deſigning.

CHAP. VI.

OF THE CAMERA OBSCURA.

WE may well imagine, that, could a young painter but view a picture by the hand of Nature herſelf, and ſtudy it at his leiſure, he would profit more by it, than by the moſt excellent performances by the hand of man. Now, nature is continually forming ſuch pictures in our eye. The rays of light coming from exterior objects, after entering the pupil, paſs through the cryſtalline humour, and being there refracted, in conſequence of the lenticular form of that part, proceed to the retina, which lies at the bottom of the eye, and ſtamp upon it, by their union, the image of the object, towards which the pupil is directed. The conſequence of which is, that the ſoul, by means as yet unknown to us, receives immediate intelligence of theſe rays, and comes to ſee the objects that ſent them. But this grand operation of Nature, the diſcovery of which was reſerved for our times, might have remained an idle amuſement of phyſical curioſity, without being of the leaſt ſervice to the painter, had not means been happily found of imitating it. The machine, contrived for this

this purpoſe, conſiſts of a lens and a mirror ſo ſituated, that the ſecond throws the picture of any thing properly expoſed to the firſt, and that too of a competent largeneſs, on a clean ſheet of paper, where it may be ſeen and contemplated at leiſure.

As this artificial eye, uſually called a Camera Optica or Obſcura, gives no admittance to any rays of light, but thoſe coming from the thing whoſe repreſentation is wanted, there reſults from them a picture of inexpreſſible force and brightneſs; and, as nothing is more delightful to behold, ſo nothing can be more uſeful to ſtudy, than ſuch a picture. For, not to ſpeak of the juſtneſs of the contours, the exactneſs of the perſpective and of the chiaroſcuro, which exceeds conception; the colours are of a vivacity and richneſs that nothing can excel; the parts, which ſtand out moſt, and are moſt expoſed to the light, appear ſurpriſingly looſe and reſplendent; and this looſeneſs and reſplendency declines gradually, as the parts themſelves ſink in, or retire from the light. The ſhades are ſtrong without harſhneſs, and the contours preciſe without being ſharp. Wherever any reflected light falls, there appears, in conſequence of it, an infinite variety of tints, which, without this contrivance, it would be impoſſible to diſcern. Yet there prevails ſuch a harmony amongſt all the colours of the piece, that ſcarce any one of them can be ſaid to claſh with another.

AFTER all, it is no way ſurpriſing, that we ſhould, by means of this contrivance, diſcover, what otherwiſe we might juſtly deſpair of ever being acquainted with. We cannot look directly at any object, that is not ſurrounded by ſo many others, all darting their rays together into our eyes, that it is impoſſible we ſhould diſtinguiſh all the different modulations of its light and colours. At leaſt we can only ſee them in ſo dull and confuſed a manner, as not to be able to determine any thing preciſely about them. Whereas, in the Camera Obſcura, the viſual faculty is brought wholly to bear upon the object before it; and the light of every other object is, as it were, perfectly extinguiſhed.

ANOTHER moſt aſtoniſhing perfection in pictures of this kind is the diminution of the ſize, and of the intenſeneſs of light and colour, of the objects and all their parts, in proportion to their diſtance from the eye. At a greater diſtance the colours appear more faint, and the contours more obſcure. The ſhades likewiſe are a great deal weaker in a leſs intenſe or more remote light. On the other hand, thoſe objects, which are largeſt in themſelves, or lie neareſt to the eye, have the moſt exact contours, the ſtrongeſt ſhades, and the brighteſt colours: all which qualities are requiſite to form that kind of perſpective, which is called aerial, as though the air between the eye and external objects, not only veiled them a little, but in ſome ſort gnawed, and preyed upon, them. This kind of perſpective

ſpective conſtitutes a principal part of that branch of painting, which regards the foreſhortening of figures, and likewiſe the bringing them forward, and throwing them back in ſuch a manner, as to make us loſe ſight of the ground upon which they are drawn. It is, in a word, this kind of perſpective, from which, aſſiſted by linear perſpective, ariſe

Dolci coſe a vedere, e dolci inganni (6).

NOTHING proves this better than the Camera Obſcura, in which nature paints the objects, which lie near the eye, as it were, with a hard and ſharp pencil, and thoſe at a diſtance with a ſoft and blunt one.

THE beſt modern painters among the Italians have availed themſelves greatly of this contrivance; nor is it poſſible they ſhould have otherwiſe repreſented things ſo much to the life. It is probable, too, that ſeveral of the Tramontane Maſters, conſidering their ſucceſs in expreſſing the minuteſt objects, have done the ſame. Every one knows of what ſervice it has been to Spagnoletto of Bologna, ſome of whoſe pictures have a grand and moſt wonderful effect. I once happened to be preſent where a very able maſter was ſhewn this machine for the firſt time. It is impoſſible to expreſs the pleaſure he took in examining it. The more he conſidered it, the more he ſeemed to be charmed with it. In ſhort, after

(6) Things ſweet to ſee, and ſweet deceptions.

trying

trying it a thouſand different ways, and with a thouſand different models, he candidly confeſſed, that nothing could compare with the pictures of ſo excellent and inimitable a maſter. Another, no leſs eminent, has given it as his opinion, that an academy, with no other furniture than the book of da Vinci, a critical account of the excellencies of the capital painters, the caſts of the fineſt Greek ſtatues, and the pictures of the Camera Obſcura, would alone be ſufficient to revive the art of painting. Let the young painter, therefore, begin as early as poſſible to ſtudy theſe divine pictures, and ſtudy them all the days of his life, for he never will be able ſufficiently to contemplate them. In ſhort, Painters ſhould make the ſame uſe of the Camera Obſcura, which Naturaliſts and Aſtronomers make of the Microſcope and Teleſcope, for all theſe inſtruments equally contribute to make known, and repreſent Nature.

CHAP. VII.

OF DRAPERY.

DRAPERY is one of the moſt important branches of the whole art, and, accordingly, demands the greateſt attention and ſtudy. It ſeldom happens, that a Painter has nothing but naked figures to repreſent; nay, his ſubjects generally conſiſt of figures cloathed from head to foot. Now, the flowing of the folds in every

garment depends chiefly upon the relief of the parts that lie under it. A certain author, I forget his name, obſerves, that, as the inequalities of a ſurface are diſcoverable by the inequalities in the water that runs over it, ſo the poſture and ſhape of the members muſt be diſcernible by the folds of the garment that covers them (7). Thoſe idle windings and gatherings, with which ſome painters have affected to cover their figures, make the clothes made up of them look, as if the body had fled from under them, and left nothing in its place but a heap of empty bubbles, fit emblems of the brain that conceived them. As from the trunk of a tree there iſſue here and there boughs of various forms, ſo from one principal or miſtreſs-fold there always flow many leſſer ones: And, as it is on the quality of the tree, that the elegance, compactneſs or openneſs of its branches chiefly depends; it is, in like manner, by the quality of the ſtuff, of which a garment is made, that the number, order, and ſize of its folds muſt be determined. To ſum up all in two words: the Drapery ought to be natural and eaſy, ſo as to ſhow what ſtuff it is and what parts it covers. It ought, as a certain author expreſſes it, to cover the body, as it were merely to ſhow it.

It was formerly the cuſtom with ſome of our maſters to draw all their figures naked, and then

(7) Qui ne s'y colle point, mais en ſuive la grace,
Et ſans la ſerrer trap la careſſe & l'embraſſe.
Moliere Gloire du Dome de Val de Grace.

drape

drape them, from the ſame principle that they firſt drew the ſkeletons of their figures, and afterwards covered them with muſcles. And it was by proceeding in this manner, that they attained to ſuch a degree of truth in expreſſing the folds of their drapery, and the joints and direction of the principal members that lay under it, ſo as to exhibit, in a moſt ſtriking manner, the attitude of the perſon to whom they belonged. That the ancient ſculptors cloathed their ſtatues with equal truth and grace, appears from many of them that are ſtill in being, particularly a Flora lately dug up in Rome, whoſe drapery is executed with ſo much judgment, and in ſo grand and rich a ſtile, that it may vie with the fineſt of their naked ſtatues, even with the Venus of Medicis. The ſtatues of the ancients had ſo much beauty when naked, that they retained a great deal (8) when cloathed. But here it muſt be conſidered, that it was uſual with them to ſuppoſe their originals cloathed with wet garments, and of an extreme fineneſs and delicacy, that, by lying cloſe to the parts, and in a manner, clinging to them, they might the better ſhow what theſe parts were. For this reaſon, a painter is not to confine himſelf to the ſtudy of the ancient ſtatues, leſt he ſhould contract a dry ſtile, and even fall into the ſame faults with ſome great maſters, who, accuſtomed to drape with ſuch light ſtuffs as ſit cloſe

(8) Induitur, formoſa eſt: exuitur, ipſa forma eſt.

to the body, have afterwards made the coarſeſt lie in the ſame manner, ſo as plainly to exhibit the muſcles underneath them. It is, therefore, proper to ſtudy nature herſelf, and thoſe modern maſters, who have come neareſt to her in this branch, ſuch as Paolo Veroneſe, Andrea del Sarto, Rubens, and, above all, Guido Reni. The flow of their drapery is ſoft and gentle, and the gatherings and plaits ſo contrived, as not only not to hide the body, but add grace and dignity to it. Their gold, ſilk and woollen ſtuffs are ſo diſtinguiſhable one from another, by the quality of their ſeveral luſtres, and the peculiar light and ſhade belonging to each, but, above all, by the form and flow of their folds, that the age and ſex of their figures are hardly more diſcoverable by their faces. Albert Durer is another great maſter in this branch, inſomuch that Guido himſelf was not aſhamed to ſtudy him. There are ſtill extant ſeveral drawings made with the pen by this great man, in which he has copied whole figures from Albert, and ſcrupulouſly retained the flow of his drapery as far as his own peculiar ſtile, leſs harſh and ſharp, but more eaſy and graceful, would allow (9). It may be ſaid, that he made the ſame uſe of Albert, that our modern writers

(9) There is one of theſe drawings in the poſſeſſion of Signor Hercules Lelli, taken from a ſmall paſſion carved in wood. It is a moſt beautiful piece. And Marcantonio Burini had once a little book, containing about a ſcore Madonas of Albert Durer, copied by Guido

ought

ought to make of the beſt Authors of the thirteenth century.

CHAP. VIII.

OF LANDSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURE.

WHEN our young painter has made a ſufficient progreſs in thoſe principal branches of his art, the deſigning, perſpective, colouring, and drapery of human figures, he ſhould turn his thoughts to landſcape and architecture; for, by ſtudying them, he will render himſelf univerſal, and qualified to undertake any ſubject; ſo as not to reſemble certain literati, who, though great maſters in ſome articles, are mere children in every thing elſe (1).

THE moſt eminent landſcape painters are Pouſſin, Loreneſe, and Titian.

POUSSIN was remarkable for his great diligence. His pieces are quite exotic and uncommon, being ſet off with buildings in a beautiful but ſingular ſtile, and with learned epiſodes, ſuch as Poets reciting their verſes to the woods, and youths exerciſing themſelves in the ſeveral gymnaſtic games of antiquity; by which it plainly appears, that he was more indebted for his ſubjects to the deſcriptions of Pauſanias, than to nature and truth.

(1) Fontenelle, dans l'Eloge de Boerhaave.

LORENESE applied himſelf chiefly to expreſs the various phenomena of light, eſpecially thoſe perceivable in the heavens. And, thanks to the happy climate of Rome, where he ſtudied and exerciſed his talents, he has left us the brighteſt ſkies, and the richeſt and moſt glorioufly cloud-tipt horizons that can well be conceived. Nay, the ſun himſelf, which, like the Almighty, can be repreſented merely by his effects, has ſcarce eſcaped his daring and ambitious pencil.

TITIAN, the great confidant of Nature, is the Homer of landſcape. His ſcenes have ſo much truth, ſo much variety, and ſuch a bloom in them, that it is impoſſible to behold them, without wiſhing, as if they were real, to make an excurſion into them. And, perhaps, the fineſt landſcape, that ever iſſued from mortal hands, is the back ground of his Martyrdom of St. Peter, where, by the difference between the bodies and the leaves of his trees, and the diſpoſition of their branches, one immediately diſcovers the difference between the trees themſelves; where the different ſoils are ſo well expreſſed, and ſo exquiſitely cloathed with their proper plants, that a botaniſt has much ado to keep his hands from them.

PAOLO Veroneſe is in architecture, what Titian is in landſcape. To excel in landſcape, we muſt, above all things, ſtudy nature. To excel in architecture we muſt chiefly regard the fineſt works of art; ſuch as the fronts of ancient edifices, and the fabrics of thoſe moderns, who have

have beſt ſtudied and beſt copied antiquity. Next to Brunelleſchi and Alberti, who were the firſt revivers of architecture, came Bramante, Giulio Romano, Sanſovino, Sanmicheli, and, laſtly, Palladio, whoſe works the young painter ſhould, above all the reſt, diligently ſtudy, and imprint deeply on his mind. Nor is Vignola to be forgot; for ſome think he was a more ſcrupulous copier of antiquity, and more exact than Palladio himſelf; inſomuch that moſt people conſider him as the firſt architect among the moderns. For my part, to ſpeak of him, not as fame, but as truth ſeems to require, I cannot help thinking, that rather than break through the generality of the rules contrived by him to facilitate practice, he has, in ſome inſtances, deviated from the moſt beautiful proportions of the antique; and is rather barren in the diſtribution and diſpoſition of certain members. Moreover, the extraordinary height of his pedeſtals and corniſhes hinders the column from ſhewing, in the orders deſigned and employed by him, as it does in thoſe of Palladio. Amongſt that great variety of proportions to be met with in ancient ruins, Palladio has been extremely happy in chuſing the beſt. His profiles are well contraſted, yet eaſy. All the parts of his buildings hang well together. Grandeur, elegance and beauty walk hand in hand in them. In ſhort, the very blemiſhes of Palladio, who was no ſlave to conveniency, and ſometimes, perhaps, was too profuſe in his decorations, are pictureſque. And we may reaſonably

believe, that it was by following ſo great a maſter, whoſe works he had continually before his eyes, that Paolo Veroneſe formed that fine and maſterly taſte, which enabled him to embelliſh his compoſitions with ſuch beautiful ſtructures.

CHAP. IX.

OF THE COSTUME.

THE ſtudy of Architecture cannot fail, in another reſpect, of being very uſeful to the young painter; inaſmuch as it will bring him acquainted with the form of the temples, thermæ, baſilics, theatres, and other buildings of the Greeks and Romans. Beſides, from the baſſo-relievos, with which it was cuſtomary to adorn theſe buildings, he may gather, with equal delight and profit, the nature of their ſacrifices, arms, military enſigns, and dreſs. The ſtudy of Landſcape, too, will render familiar to him the form of the various plants peculiar to each ſoil and climate, and ſuch other things as ſerve to characteriſe the different regions of the earth. Thus, by degrees, he will learn what we call Coſtume, one of the chief requiſites in a painter; ſince, by means of it, he may expreſs, with great preciſion, the time and place in which his ſcenes are laid.

THE Roman ſchool has been exceedingly chaſte in this branch. So was the French, as long as it continued under the influence and direction

rection of Pouſſin, whom we may juſtly ſtile the Learned Painter; whereas the Venetian School has been to the laſt degree careleſs, not to ſay, licentious. Titian made no difficulty of introducing, in an Ecce Homo of his, pages in a Spaniſh garb, and the Auſtrian Eagle on the ſhields of the Roman ſoldiers. It is true, indeed, that once he placed, in the back ground of a Crowning-with-thorns, a buſt carrying the name of the Emperor Tiberius, under whom our Saviour ſuffered: but it is likewiſe true, that, as if he thought it unbecoming a painter to pay any regard to ſuch minutiæ of learning and the coſtume, he ſhewed himſelf perfectly indifferent about them in all his other works. Tintoret, in a fall of Manna, has armed his figures with muſkets. And Paolo Veroneſe, in a Laſt-Supper, preſents us with Swiſs, Levantine, and other ſtrange figures. In ſhort, he has been ſo careleſs this way, that his pieces have been often conſidered as ſo many beautiful maſquerades.

I WANT words to expreſs how much a picture ſuffers by ſuch looſeneſs of fancy, and ſinks, as a baſtard of the art, in the eſteem of good judges. Some people, I am ſenſible, are of opinion, that ſo ſcrupulous an obſervance of the coſtume is apt to hurt pictures, by depriving them of a certain air of truth ariſing, they think, from thoſe features and habits, to which we are accuſtomed; and which are, therefore, apt to make a greater impreſſion, than can be expected from things drawn from the remote ſources of antiquity: adding

ing withal, that a certain degree of licence has ever been allowed thoſe artiſts, who, in their works, muſt make fancy their chief guide. See, ſay they, the Greeks, that is, the maſters of Raphael and Pouſſin themſelves. Do they ever trouble their heads about ſuch niceties? The Rhodian ſtatuaries, for example, have not ſcrupled to repreſent Laocoon naked, that is, the Prieſt of Apollo naked in the very act of ſacrificing to the Gods, and that, too, in preſence of a whole people, of the virgins and matrons of Ilium (2). Now, continue they, if it was allowable in the ancient ſtatuaries to neglect probability and decency to ſuch a degree, to have a better opportunity of diſplaying their ſkill in the anatomy of the human body, why may it not be allowable in modern painters, the better to attain the end of their art, which is deception, to depart now and then a little from the ancient manners, and the too rigorous laws of the coſtume? But theſe reaſons, I beg leave to obſerve are more abſurd than they are ingenious. What! are we to draw concluſions from an example, which, far from deciding the diſpute, gives occaſion to another (3). The learned are of opinion, that theſe Rhodian maſters would have done much better, had they looked out for a ſubject, in which, without offending ſo much againſt

(2) See the notes of Mr. de Piles on the poem of Mr. Du Freſnoy.

(3) Nil agit exemplum, litem quod lite reſolvit. Hor. Lib. II. Sat. iii.

truth,

truth, and even probability, they might have had an equal opportunity of diſplaying their knowledge of the naked. And, certainly, no authority or example whatever ſhould tempt us to do any thing contrary to what both decency and the reaſon of things require, unleſs we intend, like Carpioni, to repreſent

Sogni d'infermi, e fole di romanzi (4).

No! a painter, the better to attain the end of his art, which is deception, ought carefully to avoid mixing the antique with the modern; the domeſtic with the foreign; things, in ſhort, repugnant to each other, and therefore incapable of gaining credit. A ſpectator will never be brought to conſider himſelf as actually preſent at the ſcene, the repreſentation of which he has before him, unleſs the circumſtances, which enter it, perfectly agree among themſelves, and the field of action, if I may uſe the expreſſion, in no ſhape belies the action itſelf. For inſtance, the circumſtances, or, if you pleaſe, the acceſſaries, in a finding-of-Moſes, or not, ſurely, to repreſent the borders of a canal planted with rows of poppies, and covered with country houſes in the European taſte, but the banks of a great river ſhaded with cluſters of palm-trees; with a ſphinx or an Anubis in the adjacent fields; and here and there, in the back ground, a towering pyramid (5). And, indeed,

(4) The dreams of ſick men, and the tales of fools.

(5) Nealces . . . . ingenioſus &c. ſolers in arte. Siqui-

deed, the painter, before he takes either canvas or paper in hand, ſhould, on the wings of his fancy, tranſport himſelf to Egypt, to Thebes, or to Rome; and ſummoning to his imagination the phyſiognomy, the dreſs, the plants, the buildings ſuitable to his ſubject, with the particular ſpot where he has choſen to lay his ſcene, ſo manage his pencil, as, by the magic of it, make the enraptured ſpectators fancy themſelves there along with him.

CHAP. X.

OF INVENTION.

AS the operations of a General ſhould, all, ultimately tend to battle and conqueſt; ſo ſhould all the thoughts of a painter to perfect invention. Now, the ſtudies, which I have been hitherto recommending, will prove ſo many wings, by which he may raiſe himſelf, as it were, from the ground, and ſoar on high, when deſirous of trying his ſtrength this way, and producing ſomething from his own fund. Invention is the finding out probable things, not only ſuch as are adapted to the ſubject in hand, but ſuch, beſides, as by their ſublimity and beauty are moſt capable

Siquidem cum prælium navale Ægyptiorum & Perſarum pinxiſſet, quod in Nilo, cujus aqua eſt mari ſimilis, factum volebat intelligi, argumento declaravit, quod arte non poterat. Aſellum enim in litore bibentem pinxit, & crocodilum inſidiantem ei.

C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. xi.

of

of exciting ſuitable ſentiments in the Spectator, and of making him, when they happen to be well executed, fancy that it is the ſubject itſelf, in its greateſt perfection, and not a mere repreſentation of it, that he has before him. I do not ſay true things, but probable things; becauſe probability or veriſimilitude is, in fact, the truth of thoſe arts which have the fancy for their object (6). It is, indeed, the buſineſs and duty of both Naturaliſts and Hiſtorians to draw objects as they find them, and repreſent them with all thoſe imperfections and blemiſhes, to which, as individuals, they are ſubject. But an ideal Painter, and ſuch alone is a true Painter, reſembles the Poet: inſtead of copying he imitates; that is, he works with his fancy, and repreſents objects, endued with all that perfection, which belongs to the ſpecies, and may be conceived in the Archetype. 'Tis all nature, ſays an Engliſh poet, ſpeaking of poetry: and the ſame may be ſaid of painting, but it is nature methodized and made perfect (7). Inſomuch, that the circumſtances of the action, exalted and ſublimed to the higheſt degree of beauty and boldneſs they are ſuſceptible of, may, though poſſible, have never happened, exactly ſuch as the painter fancies, and thinks proper to repreſent, them. Thus, the piety of Æneas, and the anger of Achilles, are things ſo perfect in their kind, as to be merely

(6) Judgment of Hercules, Introduction.
(7) 'Tis nature all, but nature methodiz'd.
Eſſay on Criticiſm.

probable.

probable. And it is for this reaſon, that poetry, which is only another word for invention, is more philoſphical, more inſtructive, and more entertaining than hiſtory (8).

Here it is proper to obſerve, what great advantages the ancient had over the modern painters. The hiſtory of the times they lived in, fraught with great and glorious events, was to them a rich mine of the moſt noble ſubjects, which, beſides, often derived no ſmall ſublimity and pathos from the Mythology, upon which their Religion was founded. So far were their Gods from being immaterial, and placed at an infinite diſtance above their worſhippers; ſo far was their Religion from recommending humility, penance, and ſelf-denial, that, on the contrary, it appeared calculated merely to flatter the ſenſes, inflame the paſſions, and poiſon the fancy. By making the Gods partake of our nature, and ſubjecting them to the ſame paſſions, it gave man hopes of being able to mix with thoſe, who, though greatly above him, reſembled him, notwithſtanding, in ſo many reſpects. Beſides, theſe Deities of theirs were in a manner viſible, and to be met at every ſtep. The ſea was crowded with Tritons and

(8) διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστὶν, ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθ' ὅλου, ἡ δὲ ἱστορία τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει.

De la foi d'un Chretien les myſteres terribles
D'ornements egayez ne ſont point ſuſceptibles:
L'Evangile a l'eſprit n'offre de tous cotes,
Que penitence a faire, & tourments meritez.
Deſpreaux Art. Poet. Chant. III.

Nereids,

Nereids, the rivers with Naiads, and the mountains with Dryads. The woods ſwarmed with Fauns and Nymphs, who, in theſe obſcure retreats, ſought an aſylum for their ſtolen embraces. The moſt potent empires, the moſt noble families, the moſt celebrated heroes, all derived their pedigree from the greater Divinities. Nay, Gods intereſted themſelves in all the concerns of mankind. Apollo, the God of long arrows ſtood by the ſide of Hector in the fields of Troy; and inſpired him with new ſtrength and courage to batter down the walls, and burn the ſhips of the Greeks. Theſe, on the other hand, were led on to the fight and animated by Minerva, preceded by terror, and followed by death. Jove nods, his divine locks ſhake on his immortal head; Olympus trembles. With that countenance, which allays the tempeſt, and reſtores ſerenity to the heavens, he gathers kiſſes from the mouth of Venus, the delight of Gods and of men. Among the ancients, ever thing ſported with the fancy; and in thoſe works, which depend entirely on the imagination, ſome of our greateſt maſters have thought they could not do better than borrow from the Pagans, if I may be allowed to ſay it, their pictures of Tartarus, in order to render their own drawings of Hell more ſtriking and pictureſque.

After all, there have not been wanting able inventors in point of painting among the moderns. Michael Angelo, notwithſtanding the depth and boldneſs of his own fancy, is not aſhamed,

ſhamed, in ſome of his compoſitions, to Dantize, (9); as Phidias and Apelles may be ſaid formerly to have homerized (1). Raphael too, tutored by the Greeks,

(9) Concerning this, we have a ſingular anecdote in the annotations, with which Monſignor Bottari, to whom the polite arts are ſo much indebted, has illuſtrated the life of Michael Angelo. It is as follows. "We may ſee how much he ſtudied Dante by a copy of this author, (the firſt edit. with the comment of Landino) in his poſſeſſion. On the margins, which were left very broad, Bonarotti had drawn with a pen every thing contained in the poems of Dante, and, among the reſt, an infinite number of the moſt excellent naked figures, in the moſt ſtriking attitudes. This book got into the hands of Antonio Montauti of Florence, an intimate friend of the celebrated Abbate Antonio Maria Salvini, as appears from many letters written by the latter to the former, and printed in the collection of the Florentine pieces in proſe. Montauti was by profeſſion a ſtatuary, and a very able one; and ſet the greateſt eſteem upon this volume. But having ordered, on his departure from Florence, to fill the place of ſurveyor to the church of St. Peter's at Rome, that all his marbles, bronzes, books, &c. ſhould be ſent after him by ſea, under the care of one of his pupils, the veſſel, in which they were, periſhed, unfortunately, in a ſtorm between Leghorn and Civitta Vecchia, and, along with her, Montauti's pupil and all his effects, among the reſt this ineſtimable volume, which, alone, would have done honour to the library of the greateſt monarch."

(1) Phidias quoque Homeri verſibus egregio dicto alluſit. Simulacro enim Jovis Olympii perfecto, quo nullum præſtantius aut admirabilius humanæ fabricatæ ſunt manus; interrogatus ab amico, quonam mentem ſuam dirigens, vultum Jovis propemodum ex ipſo cœlo petitum, eboris lineamentis eſſet amplexus:

Greek, has found means, like Virgil, to extract the quinteſſence of truth; has ſeaſoned his works with grace and nobleneſs, and exalted nature, in a manner, above herſelf, by giving her an aſpect more beautiful, more animating, and more ſublime than ſhe is, in reality, accuſtomed to wear. In point of invention, Dominichino and Annibal Caracci, come very near Raphael, eſpecially in the pieces painted by them in Rome; nor does Pouſſin fall very ſhort of him in ſome of his pictures, particularly in his Eſther-before-Aſſuerus, and his death-of-Germanicus, the richeſt jewel belonging to the Barberine family. Of all the painters, who have acquired any extraordinary degree of reputation, no one ſtudied leſs to ſet off his pieces by bold and beautiful circumſtances, or was more a ſtranger to what is called poetical perfection, than Jacopo Baſſano. Among the numberleſs inſtances I could produce of his careleſſneſs this way, let it ſuffice

plexus: Illis ſe verſibus, quaſi magiſtris, uſum reſpondit: Iliad. 1.

Ἦ καὶ κυανέησιν ἐπ' ὀφρύσι νεύσε Κρονίων,
Ἀμβρόσιαι δ' ἄρα χαῖται ἐπεῤῥώσαντο ἄνακτος
Κρατὸς ἀπ' ἀθανάτοιο μέγαν δ' ἐλέλιξεν ὄλυμπον.

Valer. Max. Lib. III. Cap. vi. exemplo ext. 4.

Fecit Apelles & Neoptolemum ex equo pugnantem adverſus Perſas; Archelaum cum uxore & filia, Antigonum thoracatum cum equo incedentem. Peritiores artis præferunt omnibus ejus operibus eumdem Regem ſedentem in equo: Dianam ſacrificantium virginum choro mixtam; quibus viciſſe Homeri verſus videtur, id ipſum deſcribentis.

C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. x.

to

to mention a Preaching-of-St. Paul painted by him in a place, near that of his birth, called Maroſtega. Inſtead of repreſenting the Apoſtle, full of a divine enthuſiaſm, as Raphael has done, and thundering againſt the ſuperſtitions of the heathen in an aſſembly of Athenians; inſtead of exhibiting one of his auditors ſtruck to the quick, another perſuaded, a third inflamed; he makes him hold forth, in a village of the Venetian ſtate, to a parcel of poor peaſants and their wives, who take not the leaſt notice of him; the women eſpecially, who ſeem to mind nothing but the country labours, in which he had found them employed. After all, this is an admirable piece, and would be a perfect one, had the painter not diſgraced it ſo much by the poverty of his ideas.

With regard to invention, painting and poetry reſemble each other ſo much in many other reſpects, beſides that of combining in every action all the beauty and elegance it will admit, that they well deſerve the name of ſiſter arts. They differ, however, in one point, and that too of no ſmall importance. It is this. The poet, in the repreſentation of his ſtory, relates what has already happened, prepares that which is ſtill to come, and ſo proceeds, ſtep by ſtep, through all the circumſtances of the action; and to operate the greater effect on his hearers, avails himſelf of the ſucceſſion of time and place. The painter, on the contrary, deprived of ſuch helps, muſt be content to depend upon one ſingle moment.

moment. But what a moment! A moment in which he may conjure up, at once, to the eyes of his ſpectator a thouſand objects; a moment, teeming with the moſt beautiful circumſtances that can attend the action; a moment, equivalent to the ſucceſſive labours of the poet. This the works of the greateſt maſters, which are every where to be ſeen, ſufficiently evince; among others, the St. Paul-at-Lyſtra, by Raphael, whom it is impoſſible not to praiſe as often as this picture is mentioned. In order to give the ſpectator a thorough inſight into the ſubject of this piece, the painter has placed, in the front of it, the cripple already reſtored to his limbs by the Apoſtle, fired with gratitude towards his benefactor, and exciting his country men to yield him all kinds of honour. Round the cripple are ſome figures lifting up the ſkirt of his coat, in order to look at the legs reduced to their proper ſhape, and acknowledging by geſtures full of aſtoniſhment the reality of the miracle; an invention, ſays a certain author, a profeſſed admirer of antiquity, which might have been propoſed as an example in the happieſt age of Greece (2).

We have another ſhining inſtance of the power of painting to introduce a great variety of ob-

(2) The wit of man could not deviſe means more certain of the end propoſed; ſuch a chain of circumſtances is equal to a narration: And I cannot but think, that the whole would have been an example of invention and conduct, even in the happieſt age of antiquity. Webb, Dial. VII.

jects

jects on the ſcene at the ſame time, and of the advantage it has in this reſpect over poetry, in a drawing by the celebrated la Fage, which, like many other pieces of his, has not as yet been engraved, though worthier, perhaps, of that honour than any other performance of the kind. This drawing repreſents the deſcent of Æneas into Hell. The field is the dark caverns of Pluto's kingdom, through the middle of which creeps ſlowly the muddy and melancholy Acheron. Nearly in the centre of the piece appears Æneas with the golden bough in his hand, and with an air of aſtoniſhment at what he ſees. The Sybil, who accompanies him, is anſwering the queſtions which he aſks her. The perſonage there is the ferryman of the pitchy lake, by which even the Gods themſelves are afraid to ſwear. Thoſe, who crowding in to the banks of the river, numberleſs as the leaves ſhaken off the trees by autumnal blaſts, expreſs, with outſtretched hands, an impatience to be ferried to the oppoſite ſhore, are the unhappy manes, who, for want of burial, are unqualified for that happineſs. Charon, accordingly, is crying out to them, and with his lifted up oar driving them from his boat, which has already taken in a number of thoſe, who had been honoured with the accuſtomed funeral rights. Behind Æneas and the Sybil we diſcover a confuſed groupe of wretched ſouls, lamenting bitterly their misfortune in being denied a paſſage; two of them wrapt up in their clothes, and, in a fit of deſpair ſunk upon

a rock. Upon the firſt lines of the piece ſtands a third groupe of uninhumed ſhades, Leucaſpes, Orontes, and, in the midſt of them, the good old Palinurus, formerly maſter and pilot of the Hero's own veſſel, who with joined hands moſt earneſtly deſires to be taken along with him into the boat, that, after death, at leaſt, he may find ſome repoſe, and his dead body no longer remain the ſport of winds and waves. Thus, what we ſee ſcattered up and down in many verſes by Virgil, is here, as it were, gathered into a focus, and concentered by the ingenious pencil of the painter; ſo as to form a ſubject well worthy of being expoſed, in more ſhapes than one, to the eyes of the public (3).

When

(3) Ibant obſcuri ſola ſub nocte per umbras,
Perque domos Ditis vacuas & inania regna, &c.
Hinc via Tartarei quæ fert Acherontis ad undas:
Turbidus hic cœno vaſtaque voragine gurges
Æſtuat, &c.
Æneas miratus enim motuſque tumultu, &c.
Cocyti ſtagna alta vides, ſtygiamque paludem,
Dii cujus jurare timent, & fallere numen.
Hæc omnis quam cernis inops inhumataque turba eſt:
Portitor ille Charon, hi quos vehit unda ſepulti, &c.
Quam multa in Sylvis Autumni frigore primo
Lapſa cadunt folia, &c.
Stabant orantes primi tranſmittere curſum,
Tendebantque manus ripæ ulterioris amore;
Navita ſed triſtis nunc hos, nunc accipit illos,
Aſt alios longe ſummotos arcet arena, &c.
Cernit ibi maeſtos, & mortis honore carentes
Leucaſpim

When a painter takes a ſubject in hand, be it hiſtorical, be it fabulous, he ſhould carefully peruſe the books which treat of it, imprint well on his mind all the circumſtances that attend it, the perſons concerned in it, and the paſſions with which they muſt have been ſeverally animated; not omitting the particulars of time and place. His next buſineſs is to create it, as it were, anew, obſerving the rules already laid down for that purpoſe. From what is true chuſing that which is moſt ſtriking, and cloathing his ſubject with ſuch acceſſary circumſtances and actions, as may render it more conſpicuous, pathetic and noble, and beſt diſplay the powers of the inventive faculty. But, in doing this, great diſcretion is requiſite; for, let his imagination grow ever ſo warm, his hand is never to execute any thing that is not fully approved by his judgment. Nothing low or vulgar ſhould appear in a lofty and noble argument; a fault, of which ſome of the greateſt maſters, even Lampieri and Pouſſin, have been now and then guilty.

The action muſt be one, the place one, the time one. I need not, I believe, ſay any thing of thoſe

Leucaſpim & Lyciæ ductorem claſſis Orontem, &c.
Ecce gubernator ſeſe Palinurus agebat, &c.
Nunc me fluctus habent, verſantque in litore venti, &c.
Da dextram miſero, & tecum me tolle per undas,
Sedibus ut ſaltem placidis in morte quieſcam.
Virgil.

This drawing is in the poſſeſſion of the author of this Eſſay.

painters,

painters, who, like the writers of the Chineſe and Spaniſh theatre, cram a variety of actions together, and ſo give us, at once, the whole life of a man. Such blunders, I flatter myſelf, are too groſs to be feared at preſent. The politeneſs and learning of the age ſeem to demand conſiderations of a more refined nature, ſuch as, that the epiſodes introduced in the drama of a picture, the better to fill and adorn it, ſhould be not only beautiful in themſelves, but indiſpenſably requiſite. The games, celebrated at the tomb of Anchiſes in Sicily, have a greater variety in them and more ſources of delight than thoſe, that had been before celebrated at the tomb of Patroclus under the walls of Troy. The arms forged by Vulcan for Æneas, if not better tempered, are at leaſt better engraved than thoſe, which the ſame God had forged ſeveral ages before for Achilles. Nevertheleſs, in the eyes of judges, both the games and the arms of Homer are more pleaſing than thoſe of Virgil, becauſe the former are more neceſſary in the Iliad, than the latter in the Æneid. Every part ſhould agree with, and have a relation to, the whole. Unity ſhould reign even in variety, for in this beauty conſiſts (4). This is a fundamental maxim in all the arts, whoſe object it is to imitate the works of nature.

(4) This puts me in mind, of what I once heard a man of letters and great learning ſay, *Abſolute beauty is* ONE, *deformity* MANIFOLD.
Della Caſa nel Galatea.

PIC-

PICTURES often borrow no ſmall grace and beauty from the fictions of poetry. Albani has left us, in ſeveral of his works, ſufficient proofs of the great ſhare the belles lettres had in refining his taſte. But Raphael, above all others, may, in this branch too, be conſidered as a guide and maſter. To give but one inſtance out of many: what a beautiful thought was it to repreſent the river himſelf, in a Paſſage-of-Jordan, ſupporting his waters with his own hands, in order to open a way to the army of the Iſraelites! Nor has he diſplayed leſs judgment in reviving, in his deſigns engraved by Agoſtino of Venice (6), the little loves of Aetius, playing with the arms of Alexander conquered by the beauty of Roxana (7).

AMONG the ancients, Apelles and Parrhaſius were thoſe who diſtinguiſhed themſelves moſt in allegorical ſubjects; in which the inventive faculty ſhews itſelf to the greateſt advantage:

(6) The original Italian ſays, by Marco Antonio. We are indebted to the noble Author for this correction, communicated by a private letter, as ſoon as he was informed of this tranſlation being in the preſs.

(7) Ετέρωθι δὲ τῆς εἰκόνος ἄλλοι ἔρωτες παίσασιν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις τῦ Ἀλεξάνδρυ, δύο μὲν τὴν λόγχην αὐτῦ φέρονλες, &c. Lucian.

Les folâtres plaiſirs dans le ſein de repos,
Les amours enfantins deſarmoient ce héros:
L'un tenoit ſa cuiraſſe encor de ſang trempée,
L'autre avoit détaché ſa redoutable épée,
Et rioit en tenant dans ſes débiles mains
Ce fer, l'appui du trone, & l'effroi des humains.
Henriade, Chant. IX.

The

The firſt by his picture of calumny (8); the ſecond by that of the genius of the Athenians (9). That ancient painter, called Galaton, gave likewiſe a fine proof of his genius in this branch, by repreſenting a great number of poets greedily quenching their thirſt, in the waters guſhing from the mouth of the ſublime Homer. And to this Allegory, according to Guigni, Pliny has an eye, when he calls that prince of poets, the fountain of wits (1). But it is, after all, no way ſurpriſing, that we ſhould often meet ſuch fine flights of fancy in the ancient artiſts. They were not guided in their works by a blind prac-

(8) See Lucian upon calumny, and the XXth note of Carlo Dati, in the life of Apelles.

(9) Pinxit (Parrhaſius) Demon Athenienſium argumento quoque ingenioſo.

C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. X.

(1) Nonnulli quoque artifices non vulgaris ſolertiae famam captantes longius petitae inventionis gloriam praecipue ſibi amplexandam putabant. Ita Galaton pictor, teſte Æliano var. Hiſt. XIII. 22. pinxit immenſum gregem poetarum limpidas atque ubertim ex ore Homeri redundantes aquas aviditſime haurientem. Hanc imaginem repraeſentavit Ovidius III. Amorum, Eleg. 8.

Aſpice Maeoniden, a quo ceu fonte perenni,
Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis.

Manilius quoque circa initium libri ſecundi de Homero:

- - - - - Cujuſque ex ore profuſo
Omnis poſteritas latices in carmina duxit.

Plinius denique lib. XVII. Nat. Hiſt. Cap. v. videtur eo reſpexiſſe, cum Homerum vocat, fontem ingeniorum.

De Pictura Veterum, Lib. III. Cap. i.

tice; they were men of polite education; converſant with the letters of the age in which they lived; and the companions, rather than the ſervants, of the great men who employed them (2). The fineſt allegorical painter among the moderns was Rubens; and he was, accordingly, much celebrated for it. The beſt critics, however, find fault with his uniting, in the Luxemburg Gallery, the Queen-mother, in council, with two Cardinals and Mercury (3). Nor is there leſs impropriety in his making Tritons and Nereids, in another piece of the ſame gallery, ſwim to the queen's veſſel through the galleys of the knights of St. Stephen. Such freedoms are equally diſguſtful with the prophecies of Sannazaro's Proteus, concerning the myſtery of the incarnation; or the Indian kings of Camoens, reaſoning with the Portugueſe on the adventures of Ulyſſes.

(2) The ſtatuaries of Greece were not mere mechanics; men of education and literature, they were more the companions than ſervants of their employers: Their taſte was refined by the converſation of courts, and enlarged by the lecture of their poets: Accordingly, the ſpirit of their ſtudies breathes through their works.

Webb, Dial. IV.

(3) In the fine ſet of pictures, by Rubens, in the Luxemburg gallery, you will meet with various faults too, in relation to the allegories.

- - - -

THE beſt modern performances in picturesque allegory are, certainly, thoſe of Pouſſin, who availed himſelf, with great diſcretion and judgment, of the vaſt treaſures, with which, by a cloſe ſtudy of the ancients, he had enriched his memory. On the other hand, le Brun his countryman, has been very unhappy this way. Ambitious to have every thing his own, inſtead of allegories, he has filled the gallery of Verſailles with enigmas and riddles, of which none but himſelf was qualified to be the Oedipus. Allegory muſt be ingenious, it is true; but then it muſt be equally perſpicuous; for which reaſon, a painter ſhould avoid all vague and indeterminate alluſions, and likewiſe thoſe to hiſtory and heathen mythology, which are too abſtruſe to be underſtood by the generality of ſpectators. The beſt way, in my opinion, to ſymbolize moral and abſtract things, is to repreſent particular events; as Caracci did, by advice of Monſignore Agucchi, in the Farneſian palace (4). For example, what can better expreſs a hero's love towards his country, than the virtuous Decius conſecrating himſelf boldly to the infernal gods, in order to ſecure victory to his countrymen over their enemies? What finer emblems can we deſire, of emulation, and an inſatiable thirſt for glory, than Julius Cæſar weeping before the ſtatue of Alexander in the temple of Hercules at

(4) See Bellori's Life of Caracci.

Gades; of the inconſtancy of fortune, than Marius ſitting on the ruins of Carthage, and receiving, inſtead of the acclamations of an army joyfully ſaluting him Emperor, orders from a lictor of Sextilius to quit Africa; of indiſcretion, than Candaules, who, by ſhewing the naked beauties of his wife to his friend Gyges, kindled a paſſion, that ſoon made him repent his folly? Such repreſentations as theſe require no comment; they carry their explanation along with them. Beſides, ſuppoſing, and it is the worſt we can ſuppoſe, that the painter's aim in them ſhould happen not to be underſtood, his piece would ſtill give delight. It is thus that the fables of Arioſto prove ſo entertaining, even to thoſe, who underſtand nothing of the moral couched under them; and likewiſe the Æneis, though all do not comprehend the alluſions and double intent of the poet.

CHAP. XI.

OF DISPOSITION.

SO much for Invention. Diſpoſition, which may be conſidered as a branch of invention, conſiſts in the proper ſtationing of what the inventive faculty has imagined, ſo as to expreſs the ſubject in the moſt lively manner. The chief merit of Diſpoſition may be ſaid to conſiſt in that diſorder, which, wearing the appearance of mere chance, is, in fact, the moſt ſtudied effect of art. A painter, therefore, is equally to avoid the

the dryneſs of thoſe ancients, who always planted their figures like ſo many couples in a proceſſion; and the affectation of thoſe moderns, who jumble them together, as if they were met merely to fight and ſquabble. In this branch Raphael was happy enough to chuſe the juſt medium and attain perfection. The diſpoſition of his figures is always exactly ſuch, as the ſubject requires. In the battle of Conſtantine, they are confuſedly cluſtered with as much art, as they are regularly marſhalled in Chriſt's commitment of the keys to Saint Peter, and conſtituting him Prince of the Apoſtles.

Let the inferior figures of a piece be placed as they will, the principal figure ſhould ſtrike the eye moſt, and ſtand out, as it were, from among the reſt. This may be effected various ways, as by placing it on the foremoſt lines, or in ſome other conſpicuous part, of the piece; by exhibiting it, in a manner, by itſelf; by making the principal light fall upon it; by giving it the moſt reſplendent drapery; or, indeed, by ſeveral of theſe methods, nay, by all of them together. For, being the hero of the picturesque fable, it is but juſt that it ſhould draw the eye to itſelf, and lord it, as it were, over all the other objects (6).

(6) Prenant un ſoin exact, que dans tout ſon ouvrage
Elle joue aux regards le plus beau perſonnage,
Et que par aucun role au ſpectacle placé
Le Heros du Tableau ne ſe voye effacé.
Moliere la Gloire du Dome de Val de Grace.

ACCORDING to Leon Batiſta Alberti, painters ſhould follow the example of Comic Writers, who compoſe their fable of as few perſons as poſſible. For, in fact, a crowded picture is apt to give as much pain to the ſpectator, as a crowded road to the traveller.

SOME ſubjects, it muſt be granted, require a number, nay, a nation, as it were, of figures. On theſe occaſions, it depends entirely on the ſkill of the painter to diſpoſe them in ſuch a manner, that the principal ones may always make the principal appearance; and contrive matters ſo, that the piece be not over-crowded, or want convenient reſts and pauſes. He muſt, in a word, take care that his piece be full, but not charged. In this reſpect, the battles of Alexander by Le Brun are maſterpieces, which can never be ſufficiently ſtudied; whereas nothing, on the other hand, can be more unhappy than the famous Paradiſe of Tintoret, which covers one entire ſide of the Great Council Chamber at Venice. It appears no better than a confuſed heap of figures, a ſwarm, a cloud, a chaos, which pains and fatigues the eye. What a pity it is that he did not diſpoſe this ſubject after a model of his own, now in the Gallery of Bevilacqua at Verona! In this laſt, the ſeveral choirs of Martyrs, Virgins, Biſhops and other Saints, are judiciouſly thrown into ſo many cluſters, parted here and there by a fine fleece of clouds;

ſo

ſo as to exhibit the innumerable hoſt of heaven drawn up in a way, that makes a moſt agreeable and glorious appearance. There goes a ſtory to our purpoſe of a celebrated maſter, who in a drawing of the Univerſal Deluge, the better to expreſs the immenſity of the waters that covered the earth, left a corner of his paper without figures. Being aſked, if he did not intend to fill it up: No, ſaid he; don't you ſee that my leaving it empty is what preciſely conſtitutes the picture?

THE reaſon for breaking a compoſition into ſeveral groupes is, that the eye, paſſing freely from one object to another, may the better comprehend the whole. But the painter is not to ſtop here; for theſe groupes are, beſides, to be ſo artfully put together, as to form rich cluſters, give the whole compoſition a ſingular air of grandeur, and afford the ſpectator an opportunity of diſcerning the piece at a diſtance, and taking the whole in, as it were, at a ſingle glance. Theſe effects are greatly promoted by a due regard to the nature of colours, ſo as not to place together thoſe which are apt to pain by their oppoſition, or diſtract by their variety. They ſhould be ſo judiciouſly diſpoſed as to temper and qualify each other.

A PROPER uſe of the Chiaroſcuro is likewiſe of great ſervice on this occaſion. The groupes are eaſily parted, and the whole picture acquires a grand effect by introducing ſome ſtrong falls

of ſhade, and, above all, one principal beam of light. This method has been followed with great ſucceſs by Rembrant in a famous picture of his, repreſenting the Virgin at the foot of the Croſs on Mount Calvary, the principal light darting upon her through a break in the clouds, while the reſt of the figures about her ſtand more or leſs in the ſhade. Tintoret, too, acquired great reputation as well by that briſkneſs, with which he enlivened his figures, as by his maſterly manner of ſhading them; and Polidoro da Caravaggio, though he ſcarce painted any thing but baſſo-relievos, was particularly famous for introducing with great ſkill the effects of the Chiaroſcuro, a thing firſt attempted by Mantegna in his triumph of Julius Cæſar. It is by this means, that his compoſitions appear ſo ſtrikingly divided into different groupes, and, amongſt their other perfections, afford ſo much delight through the beautiful diſpoſition that reigns in them.

In like manner, a painter, by the help of perſpective, eſpecially that called aerial, the oppoſition of local colours, and other contrivances, which he may expect to hit upon by ſtudying nature, and thoſe who have beſt ſtudied her before him, will be able not only to part his groupes, but make them appear at different diſtances, ſo as to leave ſufficient paſſages between them.

But the greateſt caution is to be uſed in the purſuit of the methods here laid down; eſpecially in the management of the Chiaroſcuro, that the effects

effects attributed to light and ſhade, and to their various concomitants, may not run counter to truth and experience. This is a capital point. For this purpoſe, a painter would do well to make, in little figures, as Tintoret and Pouſſin uſed to do, a model of the ſubject that he intends to repreſent, and then illuminate it by lamp or candle light. By this means he may come to know with certainty, if the chiaroſcuro, which he has formed in his mind, does not claſh with the reaſon of things. By varying the height and direction of his light he may eaſily diſcover ſuch incidental effects, as are moſt likely to recommend his performance, and ſo eſtabliſh a proper ſyſtem for the illuminating of it. Nor will he afterwards find it a difficult matter to modify the quality of his ſhades, by ſofting or ſtrengthening them according to the ſituation of his ſcene, and the quality of the light falling upon it. If it ſhould happen to be a candle or lamp-light ſcene, he will then have nothing to do but conſider his model well, and faithfully copy it.

In the next place, to turn a groupe elegantly, the beſt pattern is that of a bunch of grapes, adopted by Titian. As, of the many grains, which compoſe a bunch of grapes, ſome are ſtruck directly by the light, and thoſe oppoſite to them are in the ſhade, whilſt the intermediate ones partake of both light and ſhade in a greater or leſs degree; ſo, according to Titian, the figures of a groupe ſhould be ſo diſpoſed, that, by the union of the chiaroſcuro, ſeveral things may ap-

pear, as it were, but one thing. And, in fact, it is only from his having purſued this method, that we can account for the very grand effect of his pieces this way, in which it is impoſſible to ſtudy him too much.

The Manneriſts, who do not follow nature in the track of the maſters juſt mentioned, are apt to commit many faults. The reaſon of their figures caſting their ſhades in this or that manner ſeldom appears in the picture, or at leaſt does not appear ſufficiently probable. They are, beſides, wont to treſpaſs all bounds in ſplaſhing their pieces with light, that is, in enlivening thoſe parts, which we uſually term the deafs of a picture. This method, no doubt, has ſometimes a very fine effect; but it is, however, to be uſed with no ſmall diſcretion, as otherwiſe the whole loſes that union, that pauſe, that majeſtic ſilence, as Carracci uſed to call it, which affords ſo much pleaſure. The eye is not leſs hurt by many lights ſcattered here and there over a picture, than the ear is by the confuſed noiſe of different perſons ſpeaking, all together, in an Aſſembly (7).

(7) Let breadth be introduced how it will, it always gives great repoſe to the eye; as on the contrary when lights and ſhades in a compoſition are ſcattered about in little ſpots, the eye is conſtantly diſturbed, and the mind is uneaſy, eſpecially if you are eager to underſtand every object in the compoſition, as it is painful to the ear, when any one is anxious to know what is ſaid in company, where many are talking at the ſame time. Hogarth's Anal. of Beauty.

Guido

GUIDO Reni, who has imparted to his paintings that gaiety and ſplendour in which he lived, ſeems enamoured with a bright and open light; whereas Michael Angelo da Caravaggio, who was of a ſullen and ſavage diſpoſition (8), appears fondeſt of a gloomy and clouded ſky; ſo that neither of them were qualified to handle indifferently all ſubjects. The Chiaroſcuro may likewiſe prove of great ſervice to a painter in given his compoſition a grand effect; but, nevertheleſs, the light he chuſes muſt be adapted to the ſituation of the ſcene, where the action is laid: nor would he be leſs faulty, who in a grotto or cavern, where the light entered by a chink, ſhould make his ſhades ſoft and tender, than he, who ſhould repreſent them ſtrong and bold in an open ſky-light.

BUT this is not, by many, the only fault which manneriſts are apt to be guilty of in hiſtorical pieces, and particularly in the diſpoſition of their figures. To ſay nothing of their favourite groupe of a woman lying on the ground with one child at her breaſt, and another playing about her, and the like, which they generally place on the firſt lines of their pieces, nor of thoſe half figures in the back ground peeping out from the hollows contrived for them, they make a common practice of mixing naked with cloathed figures; old men with young; placing one figure with its face to-

(8) In picturis alios horrida, inculta, abdita, & opaca; contra alios nitida, laeta, colluſtrata delectant. Cic. de Orator.

wards

wards you, and another with its back; they contraſt violent motions with languid attitudes, and ſeem to aim at oppoſition in every thing; whereas oppoſitions never pleaſe, but when they ariſe naturally from the ſubject, like antitheſes in a diſcourſe.

As to foreſhortned figures, too much affectation in uſing or avoiding them is equally blameable. The attitudes had better be compoſed than otherwiſe. It very ſeldom happens that there is any occaſion for making them ſo impetuous, as to be in danger of loſing their equilibrium; a thing too much practiſed by ſome painters, who may be aptly compared to thoſe mad Divines, who in their ſtrange conceits ſubtilize themſelves almoſt into downright hereſy.

In regard to drapery, equal care ſhould be taken to avoid that poverty, which makes ſome maſters look, as if, through mere penury, they grudged cloaths to their figures; and that profuſion, which Albani imputed to Guido, ſaying that he was rather a taylor than a painter. The ornaments of dreſs ſhould be uſed with great ſobriety, and it will not be amiſs to remember what was once ſaid to an ancient painter: "I pity you greatly; unable to make Helen handſome, you have taken care to make her fine (9)."

Let

(9) Ἀπελλῆς ὁ ζωγράφος θεασάμενός τινα τῶν μαθητῶν Ἑλένην ὀνόματι πολύχρυσον γράψαντα. Ὦ μειράκιον εἶπεν, μὴ δυνάμενος γράψαι καλὴν, πλουσίαν πεποιήκας. Clem. Alex. Pædag. Lib. II. C. xii. ap. Junium de pict. Vet. Apelles in Catalogo.

Poets,

LET the whole, in a word, and all the different parts of the diſpoſition, poſſeſs probability, grace, coſtume, and the particular character of what is to be repreſented. Let nothing look like uniformity of manner, which does not appear leſs in the compoſition, than it does in colouring, drapery, and deſign; and is, as it were, that kind of accent, by which painters may be as readily diſtinguiſhed, as foreigners are, by pronouncing in the ſame manner all the different languages they happen to be acquainted with.

CHAP. XII.

OF THE EXPRESSION OF THE PASSIONS.

THAT language, which, above all others, a painter ſhould carefully endeavour to learn, and from nature herſelf, is the language of the paſſions. Without it the fineſt works muſt appear lifeleſs and inanimate. It is not enough for a painter to be able to delineate the moſt exquiſite forms, give them the moſt graceful attitudes, and compoſe them well together; it is not enough to dreſs them out with propriety and in the moſt beautiful colours. It is not enough, in

Poets, like painters, thus unſkill'd to trace
The naked nature and the living grace,
With gold and jewels cover ev'ry part,
And hide, with ornaments, their want of art.
Pope's Eſſay on Crit.

fine,

fine, by the powerful magic of light and ſhade to make the canvas vaniſh. No, he muſt likewiſe know how to cloathe his figures with grief, with joy, with fear, with anger; he muſt, in ſome ſort, write on their faces, what they think, and what they feel; he muſt give them life and ſpeech (1). It, is indeed, in this branch that painting truely ſoars, and, in a manner, riſes ſuperior to herſelf; it is in this branch ſhe makes the ſpectator apprehend much more than what ſhe expreſſes.

THE means, employed in her imitations by painting, are the circumſcription of terms, the chiaroſcuro, and colours; all which appear ſolely calculated to ſtrike the viſual faculty. Notwithſtanding which, ſhe contrives to repreſent hard and ſoft, rough and ſmooth ſurfaces, which are objects of the touch; and this by means of certain tints, and a certain chiaroſcuro, which has a different look in marble, in the bark of trees, in downy and delicate ſubſtances. Nay, ſhe contrives to expreſs ſound and motion by means of light and ſhade, and certain particular configurations. In ſome landſcapes of Diderich's, we almoſt hear the water murmur, and ſee it tremble along the ſides of the river, and of the boats upon it. In

(1) Χρὴ γὰρ τὸν ὀρθῶς προσατεύσονλα τῆς τέχνης φύσιν τε ἀνθρωπείαν ἐῦ διασκέφθαι, κ) ἱκανὸν εἶ) γνωματεῦσαι ἠθῶν σύμβολα κ) σιωπώντων . . . . . Τάτων δὲ ἱκανῶς ἔχων ξυναιρήσει πάντα. κ) ἄρισα ὑποκρινεῖται ἡ χεὶρ τὸ ἑκάτε δρᾶμα. Philoſtr. junior. in proem. Iconum.

the

the battles of Burgognone we are really apt to fancy, that the trumpet ſounds; and we ſee the horſe, who has thrown his rider, ſcamper along the plain. But, what is ſtill more wonderful, painting, in virtue of her various colours, and certain particular geſtures, expreſſes even the ſentiments and moſt hidden affections of the ſoul, and renders her viſible, ſo as to make the eye not only touch and hear, but even kindle into paſſion, and reaſon.

MANY have written, and among the reſt, the famous le Brun, on the various changes, that, according to various paſſions, happen in the muſcles of the face, which is, as it were, the dumb tongue of the ſoul (2). They obſerve, for example, that, in fits of anger, the face reddens, the muſcles of the lips puff out, the eyes ſparkle; and that, on the contrary, in fits of melancholy, the eyes grow motionleſs and dead, the face pale, and the lips ſink in. It may be of ſervice to a painter to read theſe and ſuch other remarks; but it will be of infinitely more ſervice to ſtudy them in nature itſelf, for which they have been borrowed, and which exhibits them in that lively manner, which neither tongue nor pen can expreſs.

BUT, if a painter is to have immediate recourſe

(2) Omnis enim motus animi ſuum quemdam a natura habet vultum, et ſonum, et geſtum; et ejus omnis vultus, omneſque voces, ut nervi in fidibus, ita ſonant, ut a motu animi cumque ſunt palſae . . . . . hi ſunt actori, ut pictori, expoſiti ad variandum colores.

Cic. de Orat. Lib. III. N. lvii.

to

to nature in any thing, it is particularly in treating thoſe very minute and almoſt imperceptible differences, by which, however, things very different from each other are often expreſſed. This is particularly the caſe with regard to the paſſions of laughing and crying, as in theſe, however contrary, the muſcles of the face operate nearly in the ſame manner (3).

ACCORDING to Lionardo da Vinci, the beſt maſters that a painter can have recourſe to in this branch, are thoſe dumb men, who have found out the method of expreſſing their ſentiments by the motion of their hands, eyes, eye-brows, and, in ſhort, every other part of the body. This advice, no doubt, is very good; but then

(3) As the famous Pietro de Cortona was one day finiſhing the face of a crying child in a repreſentation of the Iron Age, with which he was adorning the floor, called the Hot-bath, in the royal palace of Pitte, Ferdinand II. who happened to be looking over him for his amuſement, could not forbear expreſſing his approbation, by crying out, Oh, how well that child cries! To whom the able artiſt,—has your majeſty a mind to ſee how eaſy it is to make children laugh? Behold I'll prove it in an inſtant; and taking up his pencil, by giving the contour of the mouth a concave turn downwards, inſtead of the convex upwards, which it before had, and with little or no alteration in any other part of the face, he made the child, who, a little before, ſeemed ready to burſt its heart with crying, appear in equal danger of burſting its ſides with immoderate laughter; and then, by reſtoring the altered features to their former poſition, he ſoon ſet the child a crying again. Lectures of Philip Baldinucci, in the academy of la Cruſca il Luſtrato, &c.

ſuch

ſuch geſtures muſt be imitated with great ſobriety and moderation, laſt they ſhould appear too ſtrong and exaggerated, and the piece ſhould ſhew nothing but pantomimes, when ſpeaking figures, alone, are to be exhibited; and ſo become theatrical and ſecond-hand; or, at leaſt, look lie the copy of a theatrical and ſecond-hand nature (4.)

We are told ſtrange things of the ancient painters of Greece in regard to expreſſion; eſpecially of Ariſtides, who, in a picture of his repreſenting a woman wounded to death at a ſiege, with a child crawling to her breaſt, makes her appear afraid, leſt the child, when ſhe was dead, ſhould, for want of milk, ſuck her blood (5). A Medea murdering her children, by Timomachus, was likewiſe much cried up, as the ingenious artiſt contrived to expreſs, at once, in her countenance, both the fury that hurried her on to the commiſſion of ſo great a crime, and the tenderneſs of a mother that ſeemed to withhold her from it (6). Rubens attempted to expreſs ſuch a double effect in the face of Mary of Medicis,

(4) Judgment of Hercules. Chap. iv.

(5) Is omnium primus (Ariſtides) Thebanus animum pinxit, & ſenſus hominis expreſſit, quæ vocant Græci *ethe*; item perturbationes, durior paulo in coloribus. Hujus pictura eſt, oppido capto, ad matris morientis e vulnere mammam adrepens infans; intelligiturque ſentire mater & timere, ne mortuo lacte ſanguinem lambat.

(6) Medeam vellet cum fingere Timomachi mens
Volventem in Natos crudum animo facinus,
Immanem

dicis, ſtill in pain from her paſt labour, and, at the ſame time, full of joy at the birth of a Dauphin. And in the countenance of Sancta Polonia, painted by Tiepolo for St. Anthony's church at Padua, one may, I think, clearly read a mixture of pain from the wound given her by the executioner, and of pleaſure from the proſpect of paradiſe opened to her by it.

Few, to ſay the truth, are the examples of ſtrong expreſſion afforded by the Venetian, Flemmiſh, or Lombard ſchools. Deprived of that great happineſs, the happineſs of being able to contemplate, at leiſure, the works of the ancients, the pureſt ſources of perfection in point of deſign, expreſſion and character; and having nothing but nature conſtantly before their eyes, they made ſtrength of colouring, blooming complexions, and the grand effects of the chiaroſcuro their principal ſtudy; they aimed more at charming the ſenſes than at captivating the underſtanding. The Venetians, in particular, ſeem to have placed their whole glory in ſetting off their pieces with all that rich variety of perſonages and dreſs, which their capital is continually receiving by means of its extenſive commerce,

Immanem exhauſit rerum in diverſa laborem,
Fingeret affectum matris ut ambiguum.
Ira ſubeſt lachrymis; miſeratio non caret ira,
Alterutrum videas ut ſit in alterutro.
Cunctantum ſatis eſt. Nam digna eſt ſanguine mater
Natorum, tua non dextera, Timomache.
Auſon. ex Anthолog.

and

and which attracts ſo much the eyes of all thoſe who viſit it. I doubt much, if, in all the pictures of Paolo Veroneſe, there is to be found a bold and judicious expreſſion, or one of thoſe attitudes, which, as Petrarch expreſſes it, ſpeak without words; unleſs, perhaps, it be that remarkable one in his Marriage-feaſt-at-Cana-of-Galilee, and which I don't remember to have ſeen taken notice of before. At one end of the table, and directly oppoſite to the bridegroom, whoſe eyes are fixed upon her, there appears a woman in red, holding up to him the ſkirt of her garment, as much as to ſay, I ſuppoſe, that the wine miraculouſly produced was exactly of the colour with the ſtuff on her back. And, in fact, it is red wine we ſee in the cups and pitchers. But all this while the faces and attitudes of moſt of the company betray not the leaſt ſign of wonder at ſo extraordinary a miracle. They all, in a manner, appear intent upon nothing but eating, drinking, and making merry. Such, in general, is the ſtile of the Venetian ſchool. The Florentine, over which Michael Angelo preſided, above all things curious of deſign, was moſt minutely and ſcrupulouſly exact in point of anatomy. On this ſhe ſet her heart, and took ſingular pleaſure in diſplaying it. Not only elegance of form, and nobleneſs of invention, but likewiſe ſtrength of expreſſion, triumph in the Roman ſchool, nurſed, as it were, amongſt the works of the Greeks, and in the boſom of a city, which had once been the ſeminary of learning and politeneſs.

liteneſs. Here it was, that Domenichino and Pouſſin, both great maſters of expreſſion, refined themſelves, as appears more particularly by the St. Jerome of the one, and the Death of Germanicus, or the Slaughter of the Innocents, by the other. Here it was, that aroſe Raphael, the ſovereign maſter of them all. One would imagine, that, pictures which are generally conſidered as the books of the ignorant, and of the ignorant only, he had undertaken to make the inſtructors even of the learned. One would imagine, that he intended, in ſome meaſure, to juſtify Quintilian, who affirms, that painting has more power over us than all the arts of rhetorick (4). There is not, indeed, a ſingle picture of Raphael's, from the ſtudy of which, thoſe who are curious in point of expreſſion, may not reap great benefit; particularly his Martyrdom of Saint Felicitas; his Magdalen in the houſe of the Phariſee; his Transfiguration; his Joſeph explaining to Pharaoh his dream, a piece ſo highly rated by Pouſſin. His ſchool of Athens, in the Vatican, is, to all intents and purpoſes, a ſchool of expreſſion. Among the many miracles of art, with which this piece abounds, I ſhall ſingle out that of the four boys attending on a Mathematici-

(4) Nec mirum ſi iſta, quæ tamen in aliquo ſunt poſita motu, tantum in animis valent, quum pictura tacens opus, et habitus ſemper ejuſdem, ſic in intimos penetret affectus, ut ipſam viam dicendi nonnunquam ſuperare videatur.

Quint. Inſtit. Lib. XI. Cap. iii.

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an, who ſtooping to the ground, his compaſſes in his hand, is giving them the demonſtration of a theorem. One of the boys, recollected within himſelf, keeps back, with all the appearance of profound attention to the reaſoning of the maſter; another, by the briſkneſs of his attitude diſcovers a greater quickneſs of apprehenſion; while the third, who has already ſeized the concluſion, is endeavouring to beat it into the fourth, who, ſtanding motionleſs, with open arms, a ſtaring countenance, and an unſpeakable air of ſtupidity in his looks, will never, perhaps, be able to make any thing of the matter. And it is, probably, from this very groupe, that Albani, who ſtudied Raphael ſo cloſely, drew the following precept of his; "That it behoves a painter to expreſs more circumſtances than one by every attitude; and ſo to employ his figures, that, by barely ſeeing what they are actually about, one may be able to gueſs, both what they have been already doing, and are next going to do (5)." This I know to be a difficult precept; but I know too, that it is only by a due obſervance of it, the eye and the mind can be made to hang in ſuſpence on a painted piece of canvas (6). It is expreſſion, that a painter, ambitious to ſoar in his profeſſion, muſt, above all things, labour to per-

(5) In a letter of his cited by Malvaſia, P. IV. della Felſina Pittrice.

(6) Suſpendit picta vultum mentemque tabella.
Hor. Lib. II. Epiſt. i.

fect

fect himſelf in. It is the laſt goal of his art, as Socrates proves to Parrhaſius (7). It is in expreſſion that dumb poetry conſiſts, and what the prince of our poets calls a viſible language.

CHAP. XIII.

OF PROPER BOOKS FOR A PAINTER.

FROM what has been already ſaid, it may be eaſily gathered, that a painter ſhould be neither illiterate, nor unprovided with books. Many are apt to imagine, that the Iconologia of Ripa, or ſome ſuch collection, is alone ſufficient for this purpoſe; and that all the apparatus he ſtands in need of, may be reduced to a few caſts of the remains of antiquity, or rather to what Rembrants uſed to call his antiques, being nothing more than coats of mail, turbants, ſhreds of ſtuff, and all manner of old houſhold trumpery and wearing apparel. Such things, I own, are neceſſary to a painter, and perhaps, enough for one, who wants only to paint half lengths, or is willing to confine himſelf to a few low ſubjects. But they are by no means ſufficient for him, who would ſoar higher, for a Painter who would attempt the Univerſe, and repreſent it in all its parts, ſuch as it would appear, had not matter proved refractory to the intentions of the ſovereign artiſt. Such a painter alone is a true, an univerſal, a perfect painter.—

(7) Xenoph. mem. Things of Soc. L. III.

that

No mortal, indeed, muſt ever expect to riſe to that ſublimity; yet all ſhould aſpire to it, on pain of ever continuing at a very mortifying diſtance from it; as the orator, who wiſhes to make a figure in his profeſſion, ſhould propoſe to himſelf no leſs a pattern than that perfect orator deſcribed by Tully: nor the courtier, than that perfect courtier delineated by Caſtiglione. It cannot, therefore, appear ſurpriſing, if I inſiſt on the propriety of reckoning a good collection of books as part of ſuch a painter's implements. The Bible, the Greek and Roman hiſtorians, the works of Homer, that prince of painters (8), and of Virgil, are the moſt claſſical. To theſe let him add the Metamorphoſes of Ovid, ſome of our beſt poets, the voyage of Pauſanias, Vinci, Vaſari, and others upon painting.

It will alſo be of conſiderable advantage to him to have a well-choſen collection of drawings by the beſt maſters, in order to trace the progreſs and hiſtory of his art, and make himſelf acquainted with the various ſtiles of painting, which have been, and now are, in the greateſt vogue. The prince of the Roman ſchool was not aſhamed to hang up in his ſtudy the drawings of Albert Durer; and ſpared no pains or expence to acquire all the drawings he could meet with, that were taken from ancient

(8) μᾶλλον δὲ τὸν ἄριστον τῶν γραφέων Ὅμηρον . . . . . δεδέγμεθα; Lucian. in Imag.

ſtatues

ſtatues and baſſo-relievos; things, which the art of engraving has ſince rendered ſo common as to be in every one's hands. This art of multiplying drawings by means of the graver is of the ſame date, and boaſts the ſame advantages, with the art of printing, by means of which the works of the mind are multiplied, as it were, at one ſtroke, and diſperſed over the whole world. It were to be wiſhed, indeed, that none but good books were printed, or good pictures engraved. This difference, however, muſt be allowed between the inconveniences ſeverally attending theſe two arts, that the time loſt in looking at a bad engraving is infinitely leſs than that loſt in peruſing a bad book. But, be that as it will, the ſight of fine ſubjects treated by able maſters, and the different forms, which the ſame ſubject aſſumes in different hands, cannot fail both of enlightening and enflaming the mind of the young painter. The ſame may be ſaid of the peruſal of good poets and hiſtorians, with the particulars and proofs of what they advance; not to mention thoſe Ideas and flights of invention, with which the latter are wont to cloathe, beautify, and exalt every thing they take in hand. Bouchardon, after reading Homer, conceited, to uſe his own words, that men were three times taller than before, and that the world was enlarged in every reſpect (9). It is very probable,

(9) Depuis que j'ai lû ce livre, les hommes ont quinze pieds, & la nature & s'eſt accrue pour moi. Tableaux tirez de l'Iliade, par Mr. le Comte de Caylus.

that

that the beautiful thought of covering Agamemnon's face with the ſkirt of his mantle, at the ſacrifice of Iphigenia, was ſuggeſted to Timantes by the tragedy of Euripides (1). It is, at leaſt, to the following lines of the poet,

Vergine madre figlia del tuo figlio
Umile ed alta piu che creatura,
Termine fiſſo d'eterno conſiglio,
Tu ſe' colei, che l'umana natura
Nobilitaſti ſi, che'l ſuo fattore
Non ſi ſdegnò di farſi tua fattura (2),

that we muſt aſcribe Michael Angelo's making the Virgin look at her ſon on the croſs, with a dry and ſteddy eye, and without any of thoſe ſigns of grief, which other painters generally attribute to her on that occaſion. And the ſublime conceit of Raphael, who, in a Creation of his, repreſents God in the immenſe ſpace, with one hand reaching to the Sun and the other to the Moon, may be conſidered as the child of the following words of the Pſalmiſt: *The Heavens declare the*

(1) . . . . . ὡς δ' ἐσεῖδεν Ἀγαμέμνων ἄναξ
Ἐπὶ σφαγὰς σείχουσαν εἰς αλσον κόρην,
Ἀνεστέναξε κἀμπαλιν στρέψας κάρα
Δάκρυα προύχεν ὀμμάτων πέπλον προθείς.
Eurip.

(2) Virgin mother, daughter of your ſon, the moſt humble and moſt exalted of all creatures, the term fixed upon by eternal council. Human nature has been ſo ennobled by you, that your Maker himſelf did not diſdain to be born of you.

glory of God; and the firmament ſheweth his handy work (3).

THE peruſal of good Authors cannot but be very ſerviceable to a painter in another reſpect; as, among the great number of ſubjects afforded by hiſtory and poetry, he may expect to meet with many, on which his talents may diſplay themſelves to the greateſt advantage. A painter can never be too nice in the choice of his arguments, for on the beauty of them that of his

(3) This thought of Raphael has been unjuſtly cenſured by an Engliſh writer, Mr. Webb. "A God, ſays this Gentleman, extending one hand to the Sun, and another to the Moon, deſtroys that idea of immenſity, which ſhould accompany the work of creation, by reducing it to a world of a few inches." For my part, I cannot diſcover, in this painting, a world of a few inches, but a world on a much greater ſcale; a world of millions and millions of miles: and yet this ſo immenſe a world, by means of that act of the Godhead, in which with one hand he reaches to the Sun, and with the other to the Moon, ſhrinks, in my imaginatian, to a mere nothing, in reſpect to the immenſity of God himſelf; which is all that the powers of painting can pretend to. This invention is, though in a contrary ſenſe, of the ſame kind with that of Timantes, who, to expreſs the enormous ſize of a ſleeping Polyphemus, placed round him ſome ſatyrs meaſuring the monſter's thumb with a Thyrſus. Hence, Pliny, who relates the fact, takes occaſion to tell us, that his works always imply more than they expreſs, and that how great ſoever he may be in execution, he is ſtill greater in invention; *atque in omnibus ejus operibus intelligitur plus ſemper quàm pingitur, et cum ars ſumma ſit, ingenium tamen ultra artem eſt.* Nat. Hiſt. L. XXXV. C. x.

piece

piece will greatly depend (4). How much to be pitied, therefore, were our firſt maſters, in being ſo often obliged to receive their ſubjects from the hands of ſimple and illiterate perſons; and, what is worſe, to ſpend all the riches of their art upon barren ſubjects. But why do I call them barren? I ſhould have rather ſaid, ſubjects in every reſpect unworthy the pencil. Such are the repreſentations of thoſe ſaints, who, though they never had the leaſt intercourſe with each other, and, perhaps, even lived in different ages, are, notwithſtanding, to be introduced, tete a tete, as it were, in the ſame picture. The mechanic of the art may, indeed, diſplay itſelf on theſe occaſions; but by no means the ideal. The diſpoſition may be good and praiſe-worthy, as in the works of Cortona, and Lanfranc; but we are not to expect in them either invention or expreſſion, which require for their baſis the repreſentation of ſome fact capable of producing ſuch effects. Who does not, on the bare mention of this abuſe, immediately recollect many ſad inſtances of it; ſuch as the famous St. Cæcilia of Raphael, ſurrounded by St. Paul, St. Mary Magdalen, St. John, and St. Auguſtin; and the picture of Paolo Veroneſe, in the Veſtry of the Nuns of St. Zachary at Venice, in which St. Francis of Aſſizium, Saint Catherine, and

(4) Fecit aliquid & materia. Ideo eligenda eſt fertilis, quæ capiat ingenium, quæ excitet.
Senec. Ep. XLVI.

St. Jerome richly habited in his Cardinal's robes, form a ring round the Virgin ſeated on a throne with the child Jeſus in her arms; perhaps the moſt beautiful and pictureſque of all the inſipid and inſignificant pieces, with which Italy abounds. It is very ſhocking to think, that young painters ſhould be obliged to ſtudy their art from ſuch wretched compoſitions, as others ſtudy good language in the beſt writers, in the lives of Gioſaffate and Barlaamo.

The ſubjects, in which the pencil triumphs moſt, and with which a judicious painter may ſtock himſelf by the peruſal of good books, are, no doubt, thoſe, which are moſt univerſally known, which afford the largeſt field for a diſplay of the paſſions, and contain the greateſt variety of incidents, all concurring, in the ſame point of time, to form one principal action. Of this the ſtory of Coriolanus beſieging Rome, as related by Livy, is a ſhining example. Nothing can be imagined more beautiful than the ſcene of action itſelf, which ought to take in the Prætorium in the camp of the Volſcians, the Tiber behind it, and the ſeven hills, among which the towering Capitol is, as it were, to lord it over the reſt. It is impoſſible to conceive a greater variety, than what muſt appear in that crowd of ſoldiers, women and children, all which are to enter the compoſition, unleſs, perhaps, it be that of the different paſſions with which they are ſeverally agitated; ſome wiſhing that Coriolanus may raiſe the ſiege; others fearing it; others again

again ſuſpecting it. But the principal groupe forms the moſt pictureſque part of the piece. Coriolanus, haſtily deſcended from his tribunal, and, hurried on by love, to embrace his mother, ſtops ſhort through ſhame, on her crying out to him: hold; let me firſt know, if 'tis a ſon, or an enemy I am going to embrace (5)? Thus a painter may impart novelty to the moſt hackneyed ſubject, by taking, for his guides, thoſe authors, who poſſeſs the happy talent of adding grace and dignity, by their beautiful and ſublime deſcriptions, even to the moſt common and trifling tranſactions.

CHAP. XIV.

OF A FRIEND.

THE painter may reap ſtill greater advantages from the occaſional advice of a learned and diſcreet friend. Diomedes, the better to diſcover what was going forward in the camp of the Trojans, deſired that another might be ſent with him, as two eyes ſee better than one (6). And it is to this that Socrates alludes in his ſecond Alcibiades, by his *two* who conſider

(5) Sine, priuſqnam complexum accipio, ſciam, inquit, ad hoſtem, an ad filium venerim: captiva, materne, in caſtris tuis ſim? Liv. Dec. T. L. ii.

(6) σύντε δυ' ἐρχομένω.

at once the ſame object (7). Hannibal, when about to paſs on his grand expedition from Spain into Italy, took with him a Spartan well verſed in the art of war (8). And Julius Cæſar himſelf, the ornament of mankind, uſed to conſult with Oppius and Balbus on the beſt methods of conducting himſelf in the civil war; and it is to this that we are to attribute the great ſucceſs, with which all his undertakings were crowned (9). After ſuch examples, who will dare to truſt entirely to his own judgment, and ſlight the advice of others, in military, ſtate, or literary affairs; but, above all, in the exerciſe of an art, compoſed, as painting is, of ſo many parts; and every part of ſo difficult a nature, that to excel in any one of them is ſufficient to immortalize the artiſt?

FONTENELLE uſed to ſay, that however prejudiced he was againſt books in manuſcript, he was ſtill more partial to thoſe in print (1); inſinuating thereby, that there is no neceſſity for being ſparing of our advice and cenſure to thoſe,

(7) σύντε δύο σκοπουμένω.

(8) Nec minus Annibal petiturus Italiam Lacedæmonium doctorem quæſivit armorum: cujus monitis tot conſules, tantaſque legiones inferior numero, ac viribus interemit.

Veget. de Remilit. L. III.

(9) Id quemadmodum fieri poſſit, nonnulla mihi in mentem veniunt, & multa reperiri poſſunt. De his rebus rogo vos, ut cogitationem ſuſcipiatis.

In L. X. Ep. ad Atticum.

(1) Vie de Fontenelle.

who

who come to conſult us about their works, before they have made them public: whereas the author, who brings his book ready printed, ſhews plainly that praiſe and incenſe is all he looks for. The ſame may be applied to the painter, who brings you his picture ready varniſhed, in order to have your opinion of it. A painter, if he is wiſe, will conſult a friend concerning his ſketch before he attempts to transfer it to the canvas, or rather upon the different ſketches and cartoons he ſhould make, in order to ſave himſelf the trouble and mortification of racking his piece afterwards. A friend may then venture to offer him ſuch advice, as may tend moſt to render the piece perfect. He may tell him, for example, if, in the formation of his figures, he has been guilty of that common fault, of making things too like themſelves; diſcuſs with him the merit of the ſubject, on the choice of which the merit of the execution itſelf ſo much depends; examine, if in the action he has choſen the moſt important and moſt favourable point of repreſenting it; if the incidents he has introduced are ſuch as beſt ſuit the ſubject; and, above all, if he has treated it with grace, erudition, and propriety. Pouſſin, ſo chaſte in this branch, uſed to have recourſe to Bellori, to the Commendator del Pozzo, and to the Cavalier Marini. Taddeo Zuccheri took the advice of the learned Annibal Caro concerning his picturesque inventions of Caprarola; as the great Raphael uſed to do that of the Conte di Coſtiglione, though he himſelf

was very far from being illiterate; and indeed wrote and deſigned with equal elegance; vying, in every thing, with thoſe noble artiſts of Greece, who acquired as much glory by their ſpeeches as by their works (3). Giotto, the reſtorer of painting amongſt us, made a friend and counſellor of the father of our poetry, who was not, it is ſaid, unacquainted with the practical part of deſign

(3) Gloriantur Athenæ armamentario ſuo, nec ſine cauſa; eſt enim illud opus & impenſa & elegantia viſendum. Cujus Architectum Philonem ita facunde rationem inſtitutionis ſuæ in Theatro reddidiſſe conſtat, ut diſertiſſimus populus non minorem laudem eloquentiæ ejus quam arti tribuerit. Val. Ma. L. VIII. C. XII.

Raphael da Urbino to Count Balthazar Caſtiglione.

My Lord,

I HAVE made ſeveral drawings agreeable to the inventions of your Lordſhip; and, unleſs I am greatly flattered, they are well liked by all thoſe who have ſeen them. But I cannot myſelf approve of them, for fear your Lordſhip ſhould not. I therefore ſend them to your Lordſhip, that you may chuſe ſome of them, ſhould any of them appear worthy of your choice. The Holy Father, in conferring a great honour, has laid a heavy burthen upon me; I mean that of conducting the works at St. Peter's. I hope, however, that I ſhall not ſink under it; and the more ſo, as the model I have made has been approved by his Holineſs, and much admired by ſeveral ingenious men. But I am for ſoaring ſtill higher. I would fain ſtrike out ſome beautiful forms like thoſe

ſign (4); and the painters, who, after the Buonarottis and the Vincis, ſupported the honour of the Florentine School, uſed to reſort to Galileo as to an Oracle, who to ſome ſkill in drawing united the moſt exquiſite taſte and judgment (5).

HAD Spagnoletto of Bologna conſulted with men of this character, he never would have repreſented, as he has done in a picture he drew for Prince Eugene, Chiron about to give Achilles a kick, for not taking a good aim. Nor would the painters of the Venetian School have taken ſuch liberties, eſpecially in point of the Coſtume, had they had ſuch good judges to reſtrain them.

thoſe of the ancient ſtructures. Perhaps I may meet with the fate of Icarus. Vitruvius gives me no ſmall inſight into them, but ſtill leſs than I could wiſh. As to the Galatea, I ſhould think myſelf a great maſter, were that to be the laſt I had to perform of the fine things, about which your Lordſhip writes to me. But I plainly diſcover the love you bear me, in what you ſay on this occaſion; and muſt tell you, that to paint a fine woman, I muſt ſee much finer, and, beſides, have your Lordſhip with me to make choice of the fineſt. But, as good judges and fine women are ſcarce, I am obliged to abide by certain ideas of my own. I will not take upon me to determine, if the preſent has any merit; but this I know, that I have taken no ſmall pains with her.

(4) Vaſari in his life of Giotto, and Ludovico Dolce's dialogue upon painting, p. 130. Edition of Florence in 1735.

(5) Viviani's life of Galileo.

CHAP XV.

OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PUBLIC JUDGMENT.

IT is requiſite a painter ſhould firmly believe, that there are no better judges of his art than men of true taſte and the public (6). Wo to thoſe works of art, (ſays a great man, a very eagle in the regions of knowledge) which can

(6) Omnes enim tacito quodam ſenſu, ſine ulla arte aut ratione, quæ ſunt in artibus ac rationibus recta ac prava dijudicant; idque cum faciunt in picturis & in ſignis, &c. Cic. de Orat. L. III. N. l.

Mirabile eſt enim cum plurimum in faciendo interſit inter doctum & rudem, quam non multum differat in judicando. Ars enim cum à natura profecta ſit, niſi naturam moveat ac delectet, nihil ſane egiſſe videtur. Id. ibid. N. li.

Ut enim pictores, & ii qui ſigna fabricantur, & vero etiam poetæ, ſuum quiſque opus à vulgo conſiderari vult, ut ſi quid reprehenſum ſit a pluribus, id corrigatur: hique & ſecum, & cum aliis quid in eo peccatum ſit exquirunt: ſic aliorum judicio permulta nobis & facienda, & non facienda, & mutanda, & corrigenda ſunt. Id. de Off. L. I. N. xli.

Ad picturam probandam adhibentur etiam inſcii faciendi, cum aliqua ſollertia judicandi.

Id. De opt. gen. Orat. N. iv.

Namque omnes homines, non ſolum architecti, quod eſt bonum poſſunt probare.

Vitr. Lib. VI. Cap. xi.

pleaſe

pleaſe none but artiſts (7). Baldinucci gives us a pleaſant inſtance of the weakneſs of a Florentine painter in this reſpect. Being told by a gentleman, who came to ſee one of his pieces, that a hand in it would not admit that attitude, but looked as if crippled, he immediately made him an offer of his crayon, deſiring him to alter what he thought amiſs in it, But the gentleman excuſing himſelf, by ſaying, "How ſhould I be able to do it, who am not of the profeſſion?" The painter, who ſtood in wait for this anſwer, replied, "What right have you, then, to cenſure the works of thoſe who are (8)?" As though a man ſhould be able to deſign a hand like Peſareſe, to know if another, in deſigning one, has crippled it or not (9). There appeared a great deal

(7) Malheur aux productions de l'Art, dont toute la beauté n'eſt que pour les artiſtes. Mr. D'Alembert dans l'Eloge de M. de Monteſquieu.

(8) Notitie de' Profeſſori del Diſegno, &c. Anecdotes of the profeſſors of deſign from the days of Cimabue to the preſent, containing thirty years, from 1580 to 1610, in the Life of Fabrizio Boſchi.

(9) That ſaying of Donatellus to Philip, "Here's wood for you, do it yourſelf," will not always hold good; for the perſon to whom it is addreſſed, may, reply, "Though I cannot do better myſelf, I know "when you do wrong." There is to this purpoſe a moſt beautiful paſſage in Dionyſius Halicarnaſſenſis, where he gives his opinion of the hiſtory of Thucidydes. His words are: "But though we are not poſſeſſed of the exquiſite and lively genius of Thucidydes, and other great writers, we may yet claim ſome ſhare of their judgment. It was never deemed unlawful

deal more ſenſe in the conduct of that Venetian painter, who, when any honeſt mechanic happened to have buſineſs with him, never miſſed the opportunity of taking his opinion concerning the pieces he was then about; and, on the good man's telling him, that he was no judge of painting, immediately cancelled what he had been doing, and began it anew. Though all men are not acquainted with the niceties of an art, all can diſcern if a figure is free or cramped in its motions, if the colouring of it is lively enough, if its drapery ſits well, if it operates and expreſſes what it ought to operate and expreſs. In ſhort, there is no man, who, without entering into the niceties and depths of things, may not form a right judgment concerning the repreſentation of thoſe, which he himſelf has a proper feeling of, by having them conſtantly before his eyes; nay, a better judgment, perhaps, than the artiſt himſelf, who has his own favourite modes of attitude, drapery, and colouring; who has contracted a certain habit of ſeeing in the ſame ſtile that he works, and in all he does aims ſo conſtantly at ſome peculiar form, as to blame every thing

unlawful for inferior artiſts, nor even thoſe who did not belongto the profeſſion, to criticiſe the works of an Apelles, a Zeuxis, or a Protogenes; of a Phidias, a Polictetus, or a Miron. Nay, it often happens, that the moſt illiterate perſons, in their judgment of things immediately ſubject to the ſenſes, ſhew themſelves no way inferior to the moſt learned."

Carlo Dati Vita di Apelles.

that

that differs from it. Painters, excluſive of that envy which ſometimes blinds them, judge oftener according to Paolo or Guercino, as writers do according to Boccaccio and Davanzati, than according to nature and truth. But it is not ſo with men of true taſte and the public, equally ſtrangers to ſchool prejudice (1). It is certain, that the Tarpa, without whoſe approbation no poets could gain admittance into the library of Apollo Palatinus, was himſelf no poet. Nor was the audience an audience of poets, which, in the French theatre, had taſte enough to give the Armida, Miſantrope, and Athalia the preference over all their other dramatic performances.

THE academies of painting, even thoſe compoſed of artiſts, are very ſubject to give falſe judgment, and the rather, as the heads of them have often obtained that honour by favour and intrigue, which, even in times deemed the happieſt for the polite arts, were often ſufficient to raiſe men of no merit above the heads of the moſt deſerving (2). And to this, no doubt, it is owing,

(1) Je ferois ſouvent plus d'etat dè l'avis d'un homme de bon ſens, qui n'auroit jamais manié le pinceau, que de celui de la plus part des peintres. M. de Piles Remarq. 50. ſur le Poeme de Arte graphica de M. du Freſnoy.

(2) Quoniam autem . . . . animadverto potius indoctos quam doctos gratia ſuperare, non eſſe certandum judicans cum indoctis ambitione, potius his præceptis

owing, that the numerous ſocieties of that kind, founded of late by the liberality of Princes in Italy, Germany, and France, for the improvement of painting, have not produced a ſingle pupil comparable with any of the ancient maſters. Thoſe great men did not, in ſtudying the art, ſervilely aim to pleaſe the director of an academy, in hopes of obtaining his recommendation and intereſt, as is now the caſe. They did not give themſelves up as ſlaves to follow blindly his favourite ſtile; but, true to their natural genius, they applied themſelves to ſuch things as beſt ſuited it, without running any riſk of ſpoiling their fortune; and painted not to flatter a maſter, but to pleaſe mankind. It is but lately they diſcovered in France, how much this art ſuffered by being under the dictature, or rather tyranny, of a director, who, in a few years, had diffuſed his own particular manner into the works of the youth under his care, and infected

ceptis editis oſtendam noſtræ ſcientiæ virtutem. Vitruv. in Proemio, Lib. III.

Pardon me, I beſeech you, as you yourſelf have experienced what it is to be deprived of liberty, and live under obligations to patrons, &c.

Raphael's letter to M. F. Raibolini, called il Francia.

But if the other five books ſhould be late to appear, I am not to be blamed for it. It muſt rather be imputed to my bad fortune, in having to deal with Princes, who laviſh their riches, I need not tell you how; which, however, is generally the fault of their miniſters. Seb. Serlio, Lib. III. in fine.

with

with it the whole ſchool. And to this diſcovery, in all probability, is owing the wiſe method they have ſince taken, of expoſing the works of their academiſts in public, to the open day, in which, to uſe the words of a maſter, the ſmalleſt blemiſh becomes viſible; that is, to a judgment, to which Phidias (3), Apelles (4), Tintoret, and many others of the moſt famous maſters, ancient and modern, ſubmitted theirs. True it is, that either through the novelty of a ſubject, or the tricks of thoſe who exhibit it, the multitude is ſometimes liable to be miſtaken. But free from partiality, and guided by a certain natural good ſenſe, as well as by the authority of good judges, they at laſt come to ſet a juſt value upon the ſeveral works of an artiſt; and, without knowing any thing of the contraſt between light and ſhade, richneſs of colouring, beauty of attitude, or of the manner in which this or that effect is produced; in ſhort, without knowing any thing of the niceties of the art, they judge, and from their judgment there lies no appeal, as well of the parts as of the whole of a piece. It was this opinion of the multitude, that encouraged Titian to follow the paths of Giorgione

(3) ἐπεὶ καὶ φειδίαν φάσιν ὕυλω ποιῆσαι, &c.
Lucian. de Imaginibus.

(4) Idem (Apelles) perfecta opera proponebat pergula tranſeuntibus, atque poſt ipſam tabulam latens vitia, quæ notarentur, auſcultabat, vulgum diligentiorem judicem quam ſe preferens.
C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. XXXV. Cap. x.

and

and nature; that ſolemnly belied, and turned to their ſhame, the judgment, which certain Canons, aſſembled in chapter, had pronounced concerning a piece of Vandyke's (5); that placed the Communion of St. Jerome on a footing with the transfiguration of Raphael, in ſpite of the clamour firſt raiſed by the rivals of Domenichino againſt that ineſtimable performance (6). The multitude, in a word, who, properly ſpeaking, are the firſt maſters of a painter, are likewiſe, and it is but juſt they ſhould be ſo, his ſovereign judges.

CHAP. XVI.

OF THE CRITICISM NECESSARY TO A PAINTER.

LET not a profeſſor, deſirous of obtaining univerſal applauſe, be backward in doing juſtice to the merit of others, who have gone before him; nor let him be afraid, where juſtice requires it, to cenſure freely their defects. He is not, either through affection for his own ſchool, or even love for his country, to erect an idol in his own mind; but tutored by ſcience, according to the infallible rule of truth, he muſt aſſign every painter that rank, which he is beſt entitled to;

(5) Deſchamps Vies des Peintres Flamands, T. II. dans la Vie de Vandick.

(6) Bellori in the Life of Domenichino.

he

he muſt pay due regard to his ſtile and manner. His judging thus of the merit of other men's works will turn greatly to the benefit of his own.

THIS is the more neceſſary, conſidering how little the judgment of thoſe, who have written the lives of painters, is to be depended on. The merit of theſe writers, utter ſtrangers to the elegant acuteneſs of Pliny, conſiſts entirely in giving a blind and tedious account of all the blunders committed, and all the good things ſaid, by this or that painter, and a liſt of all his works; but not a word of his merit as a painter, no more than if he had never handled a pencil: for as to the praiſes, which they beſtow on them by wholeſale, juſt as they come uppermoſt, they are too vague to characteriſe any of them; not unlike thoſe which Arioſto laviſhes on the principal maſters of the age he lived in,

Duo Doſſi, e quel che a par ſculpe e colora
Michel pui de mortale angel divino
Baſtiano, Raffael, Tizian, chonora
Non men Cador, che quei benezia, e Urbino (7).

(7) The two Doſſi, and Michael, who, more than mortal, a divine angel, both carves and paints equally well; Baſtiano, Raphael, and Titian who do as much honour to Cador, as theſe to Venice and Urbino.

An Engliſh writer ſays of this verſe; "this "praiſe is exceſſive, not deciſive; it carries no "idea."

WHERE-

WHEREVER, therefore, a young painter happens to be, let him make it his buſineſs to ſee the works of the beſt maſters; but let him ſee them with a critic's eye, and obſerve as well their beauties as their blemiſhes. Achilles himſelf had a vulnerable part; nor was the divine genius who celebrates him, without imperfection. Neither one nor the other had received a compleat dip. Among mortals, the beſt is he who is leaſt bad (8). Let not the young painter, therefore, be aſhamed to ſay of one piece; "here is no correctneſs of deſign, no grandeur in the outline, nor is the coſtume duely obſerved; there the rules of perſpective are violated, the chiaroſcuro falſe, the reaſons for ſuch a reflection of colour not ſufficiently apparent." And of another piece, "here the colouring is lively, the features are fine, the penciling bold, the flow of drapery eaſy, the groupes well diſpoſed, the degradation well conducted, and the contraſts both natural and ingenious." Happy the painter, who unites the grace and expreſſion of this maſter with the colouring and ſhading of that; the truth and beauty poſſeſſed ſeverally by theſe two; the ſymmetry obſervable in this piece, with the beautiful confuſion preſerved in that!"

(8) . . . . . optimus ille eſt,
Qui minimis urgetur. Hor. L. I. Sat. iii.
Whoever thinks a faultleſs piece to ſee,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er ſhall be.
Eſſay on Crit.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

OF THE PAINTER's BALANCE.

BY ſuch obſervations as theſe, a young painter will, in time, acquire the facility of forming a right judgment of thoſe maſters, who hold the firſt rank in his profeſſion. The celebrated de Piles, who, by his writings, has thrown ſo much light upon painting, in order to reduce ſuch judgment to the greater preciſion, bethought himſelf of a pictorical balance, by means of which a painter's merit may be weighed with the greateſt exactneſs. This merit he divides into compoſition, deſign, colouring, and expreſſion; and in each of theſe branches he has aſſigned every painter that ſhare he thought him entitled to, according as he approached more or leſs the higheſt degree of excellence, and ſummit of perfection; ſo that, by ſumming up the numbers, which, ſtanding againſt each maſter's name, expreſs his ſhare of merit in each of theſe branches, we have his total merit or value in the art, and may hence gather what rank one painter holds in regard to another. Several objections, it is true, have been ſtarted to this method of calculation, by a famous mathematician of our days, who, among other things, inſiſts, that it is the product of the above numbers, multiplied by each other, and not the ſum of them that gives the true merit

rit of the artiſt (9). But this is not a place to enter into ſuch niceties, nor, indeed, would the doing it be of any ſervice to the art. The only thing worth our notice is, whether the original numbers, ſtanding for the painter's merit in the ſeveral branches of his art, are ſuch as he is really intitled to, without ſuffering ourſelves to be biaſſed by any partiality, as de Piles has been, in favour of the Prince of the Flemiſh ſchool; the conſequence of which, ſtrange as it may appear, is, that in his balance Raphael and Rubens turn out exactly of the ſame weight.

RAPHAEL is now univerſally allowed to have attained that degree of perfection, beyond which it is ſcarce lawful for mortals to aſpire. Painting, in ſome meaſure revived among us by the diligence of Cimabue, towards the decline of the thirteenth century, received no ſmall improvement from the genius of Giotto, Maſaccio, and others; inſomuch that, in leſs than two hundred years, it began to blaze forth with great luſtre in the works of Ghirlandai, Gian Bellino, Mantegna, Pietro Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, the beſt grounded of them all, a man of great learning, and the firſt who contrived to give relief to pictures. But whatever improvement the art might have received from theſe different maſters in different parts of Italy,

(9) See remarks on Monſieur de Piles's ballance of painters, as it appears at the end of his courſe of painting by Monſieur de Mairan. Mem. de l'Acad. des Sciences, 1753.

they

they ſtill, to a man almoſt, ſervilely followed the ſame manner, and all partook more or leſs of that hardneſs and dryneſs, which, in an age ſtill Gothic, painting received from the hands of it's reſtorer Cimabue; till Raphael, at length, iſſuing from the Perugian ſchool, and ſtudying the works of the Greeks, without ever loſing ſight of nature, brought the art, in a manner, to the higheſt pitch of perfection. This great man has, if not entirely, at leaſt in a great meaſure, attained thoſe ends, which a painter ſhould always propoſe to himſelf, to deceive the eye, ſatisfy the underſtanding, and touch the heart. So excellent are his pieces, that the ſpectator, far from praiſing his pencil, ſeems ſometimes entirely to forget that they are the feats of it he has before him; ſolely intent upon, and, as it were, tranſported to the ſcene of action, in which he almoſt fancies himſelf a party. Well, indeed, has he deſerved the title of *Divine*, by the beauty and comprehenſiveneſs of his expreſſion, the juſtneſs and nobleneſs of his compoſitions, the chaſtity of his deſigns, and the elegance of his forms, which always carry a natural ingenuity along with them; but above all, by that inexpreſſible gracefulneſs, more beautiful than beauty itſelf, with which he has contrived to ſeaſon all his pieces. Carlo Maratti having engraved a piece, called the School, placed at the top of it the three graces with this verſe under them.

Senza

Senza di noi ogni fatica è vana (1).

WITHOUT their aid, in fact, the light of a picture is no better than darkneſs, every attitude is inſipid, every motion aukward. 'Tis they who impart to every thing that *Je ne ſçai quoi*, that charm, which is as ſure to conquer, as impoſſible to be defined. Maratti has placed the graces on high, and, as it were, deſcending from Heaven, in order to ſhew that they really are a celeſtial gift. Happy the artiſt on whoſe cradle they have ſmiled, whoſe vows and offerings they have not diſdained! Maratti was not to be informed, that gracefulneſs, that jewel which adds ſuch value to every thing, though not originally obtainable by all the gold of diligence and ſtudy, may yet be greatly heightened and poliſhed by them.

THOUGH Raphael might boaſt, like Apelles of old, whom he reſembled in ſo many other reſpects, that in gracefulneſs he had no equal (2), yet Parmigiano and Correggio muſt be allowed to have come very near him. One of them has,

(1) Without our aid all labour is in vain,

(2) Præcipua ejus (Apellis) in arte venuſtas fuit, cum eadem aetate maximi pictores eſſent: quorum opera cum admiraretur, collaudatis omnibus, deeſſe iis unam Venerem dicebat, quam Græci Charita vocant: Cætera omnina contigiſſe: ſed hac ſoli ſibi neminem parem.

Plin. Nat. Hiſt. L. XXXV. C. x.

Ingenio, & gratia, quam in ſeipſo maxime jactat, Apelles eſt præſtantiſſimus.

Quintil. Inſt. Orat. L. XII. C. x.

however,

however, often treſpaſſed the juſt bounds of ſymmetry; and the other is not always chaſte in his deſigns: both, beſides, were too apt to be guilty of affectation. We ought, perhaps, to forgive Correggio every thing, for the ſake of that uncommon greatneſs of manner, that life and ſoul which he has infuſed into all his figures; for the ſake of that inimitable eaſe and delicacy of pencil, which makes his pieces appear as if finiſhed in a day, and ſeen in a glaſs. Of this we have a ſufficient proof in the Ancona of St. Jerome and the Magdalen on their knees before the child Jeſus, which is in Parma; the fineſt picture, perhaps, that ever iſſued from mortal hands.

THERE are ſome glimpſes of Correggio's ſtile in the works of Barrocci, though he ſtudied at Rome. He never drew a figure that he did not borrow from nature; and, for fear of loſing the maſſes, uſed to drape his models with very large folds. His pencil was exceedingly ſweet, and his colouring equally harmonious. He, indeed, ſpoiled a little the natural tints by too free an uſe of reds and blues, and has now and then robbed things of their body by ſhading them too much, and melting them, as it were, into one another. In point of deſign he was far more diligent than ſucceſsful; and, in the air of his heads, affected the gracefulneſs of the Lombard School, rather than the elegance of the Greeks and his Countryman Raphael.

MICHAEL

MICHAEL Angelo was a perfect ſtranger to all manner of gracefulneſs. But he was learned, profound, ſevere, bold in his poſtures, and the firſt that introduced the terrible into painting.

JULIO Romano, full of ſpirit, and of learned and uncommon conceits, ſeems to come nearer the manner of Michael Angelo, than the elegantly natural one of Raphael, under whom he ſtudied.

THE Germans, by ſervilely following Michael Angelo, gave into thoſe ſtrange attitudes and clumſy forms, which appear in the works of their greateſt men, Sprangher and Golzio.

THE Florentines copied him with greater judgment and diſcretion. We muſt, however, except Andrea del Sarto, who, though an obſerver of truth, is ſomewhat clumſy in his figures. But then he is eaſy in his draperies; ſweet in his colours; and would have carried the palm among the Tuſcans, had it not been raviſhed from him by Fra. Bartolomeo, to immortaliſe whom his St. Mark in the palace Pitti would alone be ſufficient; for there is not wanting in that piece any of the perfections neceſſary to conſtitute an excellent maſter.

TITIAN, whom Giorgone firſt initiated in the art, is an univerſal maſter. Upon every thing he took in hand, he has contrived to ſtamp its own proper nature. His pencil flows with juices that are truely vital. His figures breathe; and the blood circulates in their faces. And though ſome, perhaps,

perhaps, have ſurpaſſed him in deſign, not but that he is generally correct enough in the bodies of his women, and his children, on account of their form, have been ſtudied by the greateſt maſters (3); he never had his equal in colouring, or in portrait and landſcape painting. He moſt indefatigably ſtudied truth and never loſt ſight of her. He moſt indefatigably laboured to convert, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, the colours of his pallet into fleſh and blood. But what coſt him moſt was, as he himſelf confeſſes, to cover and hide this fatigue; and in this he has ſucceeded ſo well, that his works ſeem rather born than made. His fortune equalled his merit. He was greatly honoured by Charles V, as the great Raphael had been, a few years before, by the Popes Julius II. and Leo X.

JACOPO Baſſano diſtinguiſhed himſelf, at the ſame time, by the ſtrength of his colouring. Few have equalled him in the juſt diſpenſation of light reflected from one object to another, and in thoſe happy contraſts, by means of which painted objects become really tranſparent. He may boaſt his having deceived an Annibal Caracci, as Parrhaſio formerly deceived Zeuxes (4); and had the glory of Paolo Veroneſe's not being willing that his ſon Carletto ſhould learn the principles of colouring from any other maſter.

PAOLO Veroneſe was the Creator, as it were, of a new manner. Though careleſs in point of

(3) Bellori's lives of Pouſſin and Franceſco Fiammingo.

(4) See an account of this deception in the life of Annibal Caracci.

deſign, and, in point of Coſtume, extremely licentious, he was moſt noble of fancy, and moſt fruitful of invention. One would imagine, that thoſe, who behold his magnificent pictures, longed to be of the action repreſented by them; and, it may be ſaid of him, with great juſtice, that even his faults are pleaſing (5). He has had very great admirers in every age, and among them a Guido Reni, whoſe praiſe, no doubt, would have flattered him moſt.

TINTORET is no way inferior to any of the Venetians in thoſe pieces, which he drew by way of diſplaying his talents and not improving them. This he has particularly ſhewn in his Martyrdom, now in the School of St. Mark, in which there is deſign, colouring, compoſition, effects of light, life, expreſſion, and all carried to the higheſt pitch of perfection. Scarce had this picture made its appearance, when all mankind ſeemed to fall in love with it. Aretine himſelf, though ſo warm a friend to Titian, that through mere jealouſy he turned Tintoret out of his School, could not forbear crying it up to exceſs. He wrote himſelf to Tintoret, that this piece had extorted the applauſe of all thoſe who ſaw it. The ſcene, adds he, appears rather true than feigned; and happy would you be, if, inſtead of being ſo expeditious, you could prevail on yourſelf to be a little more patient (6).

(5) In quibuſdam virtutes non habent gratiam, in quibuſdam vitia ipſa delectant.
Quint. Inſt. Orat. Lib. XI. C. iii.

(6) Vide Lettera LXV. III. Raccolta di Lettere ſulla Pittura, Scultura, e Architettura.

NEXT to theſe great artiſts, who had no guide but nature, or the moſt perfect copies of nature, the Greek ſtatues, ſtarted up thoſe other artiſts, whom we are not to conſider as the diſciples of nature, ſo much as of thoſe maſters, who a little before had revived the art of painting, and reſtored it to its ancient honour and dignity. Such were the Caraccis, who undertook to unite in their manner the beauties of all the moſt famous Italian Schools, and founded a new one, which did not yield to the Roman in elegance of forms, to the Florentine in correctneſs of deſign, nor to the Venetian or Lombard in beauty of colouring. Theſe ſchools, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, are the primitive metals of painting; and the Caraccis, by melting them down together, compoſed a Corinthian metal, noble indeed and beautiful to look at, but wanting the ſtrength, ductility, and weight poſſeſſed ſingly by the different metals which compoſe it. And, indeed, the greateſt praiſe, that can be beſtowed on the works of the Caraccis, is not owing to any air of originality in them, or any perfect imitation of nature, but to the ſtriking likeneſs in them, to the manner of Titian, Raphael, Parmigianio, and Correggio. As to the reſt, the Caraccis did not neglect to provide their ſchool with all thoſe helps, which learning could afford; from a conviction that the arts never ſucceed through mere good fortune, or boldneſs of fancy, but are rather ſo many habits working according to the dictates of learning and right

reaſon (7). In their ſchool the pupils were taught perſpective, anatomy; in a word, every thing neceſſary to lead them by the ſhorteſt and ſafeſt road. And it is to this that we are chiefly to attribute the ſchool of Bologna's having produced a greater number of able maſters than any other.

At the head of theſe maſters ſtand Domenichino and Guido; one a moſt curious obſerver of nature, and moſt profound painter, the other the inventor of a certain noble and beautiful manner peculiar to himſelf, which ſhines eſpecially in that ſweetneſs and beauty he has contrived to give the faces of his woman. Both theſe artiſts have been preferred to the Caraccis, and it muſt be owned, that the laſt did really excel them.

Francesco Barbieri, called il Guercino, ſtudied firſt in this ſchool, but he afterwards formed to himſelf a certain peculiar manner, entirely founded upon nature and truth. Quite careleſs in the choice of his forms, he produced a Chiaroſcuro that gives the greateſt relief to objects, and renders them palpable. Caravaggio, the Rembrants of Italy, was the real author of this manner, which, in theſe our days, has been again brought to light by Piazetta and Creſpi. He abuſed the ſaying of that Greek, who being aſked, who was his maſter, pointed to the populace; and ſuch, indeed, was the magic of his Chiaroſcuro, that, as often as he undertook to copy nature in low and trivial ſubjects, he had the power of deceiving even a Domenichino and a Guido. The ſtile of Caravaggio was followed by two famous Spaniards,

(7) ἡ μὲν οὖν τέχνη . . . . . ἕξις τις μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς ποιητικὴ ἔστιν. Ariſt. Eth. L. VI. C. iv.

ards, Velaſquez, the founder of a ſchool amongſt his country men, and il Ribera, who ſettled in Italy, and from whom afterwards the whimſical Salvator Roſa, and that moſt fertile genius Lucas Giordano, the Proteus and thunderbolt of painting, ſtudied the firſt principles of the art.

Between the maſters of the Bolognian, and thoſe of the other ſchools of Italy, we are to place Rubens, the prince of the Flemmiſh School, and a man of the moſt elevated genius, who appeared, at once, as painter and ambaſſador in a country, which, in a few years after, ſaw one of its greateſt poets Secretary of State. Nature endowed him with great vivacity, and great eaſe in working; and he added learning to theſe natural gifts. He, too, ſtudied our maſters, Titian, Tintoret, Caravaggio and Paolo; and borrowed a little from every one of them, ſo ſparingly, however, that his own peculiar manner predominates. He was in his movements more moderate than Tintoret, more ſoft in his Chiaroſcuro than Caravaggio, but not ſo rich in his compoſitions, or light in his touches as Paolo; and, in his carnations, always leſs true than Titian, and leſs delicate than his own ſcholar Vandyke. He contrived to give his colours the greateſt tranſparency, and no leſs harmony, notwithſtanding the extraordinary deepneſs of them; and he had a ſtrength and grandeur of ſtile entirely his own. He would have ſoared ſtill higher, had nature afforded him finer objects in Flanders, or had he known how to create them anew, or correct

them after the patterns left us by the Greek maſters.

POUSSIN, the prince of French painters, had a particular fondneſs for the works of Rubens, at the ſame time that he ſought for the art of deſign amongſt the ancient marbles, in which, as an ingenious author expreſſes it, ſhe ſits as Queen to give law to the moderns. He ſpared no pains in the choice and compoſition of his ſubjects; and to give them life, learning and dignity. He would have equalled Raphael himſelf, whoſe ſtile he imitated, were gracefulneſs, eaſe and vivacity to be acquired by ſtudy. For, in fact, it was by mere dint of labour and fatigue, that he produced what, in a manner, coſt Raphael nothing; inſomuch, that his figures may be ſaid to mimick the natural actions of that great maſter.

CHAP. XVII.

OF IMITATION.

A Painter ought attentively to conſider, compare together, and weigh in the balance of reaſon and truth all theſe different ſtiles. But he ought likewiſe carefully to guard againſt too great a fondneſs for any one of them in particular, that he may think proper to adopt; otherwiſe, to uſe the Danteſque expreſſion of a firſt rate maſter, inſtead of the child, he would become the grandchild of nature (8).

BESIDES, his imitation muſt be of generals, and not of particulars. Whatever a young pain-

(8) Da Vinci on Painting.

ter's

ter's natural diſpoſition may be, whether to paint boldly and freely, like Tintoret and Rubens, or to labour his works, like Titian or da Vinci, let him follow it. This kind of imitation is very commendable. It is thus that Dante, at the ſame time that he carefully avoided adopting the particular expreſſions of Virgil, endeavoured to ſeize his bold and free manner, and at laſt caught from him

Lo bello ſtile che gli ha fatto onore (9).

Whereas little has accrued to that numerous herd, who ſtole from Petrarch his peculiar expreſſions and images, and racked their brains to think like him.

As to the reſt, nothing ſhould hinder an able maſter from making uſe, now and then, of any antique or even modern figure, which he may find his account in employing. Sanzio, in a St. Paul-at-Lyſtra, ſcrupled not to avail himſelf of an ancient ſacrifice in baſſo relievo; nor did Bonarroti himſelf diſdain to uſe, in his paintings of the Sextine chapel, a figure taken from that famous Cornelian, which, tradition tells us, he wore on his finger, and which is now in the poſſeſſion of the moſt Chriſtian King. Men, like theſe, avail themſelves of the productions of others in ſuch a manner, as to make us apply to them, what la Bruyere ſaid of Deſpreaux; that one would imagine the thoughts of other men had been of his own creation (1).

(9) That elegance of ſtile, which has done him ſo much honour.

(1) Harangue a l'Academie.

In general, a painter ſhould have his eye conſtantly fixed on nature, that inexhauſtible and varied ſource of every kind of beauty; and ſhould ſtudy to imitate her in her moſt ſingular effects. As beauty, ſcattered over the whole univerſe, ſhines brighter in ſome objects than in others, he ſhould never be without his little book and crayon, in order to make drawings of every beautiful or uncommon object that may happen to preſent itſelf; and take ſketches of every fine building, every ſituation, every effect of light, every flight of clouds, every flow of drapery, every attitude, every expreſſion of the paſſions, that may happen to ſtrike him. He may afterwards employ theſe things as occaſions offer; and in the mean time will have the advantage of acquiring a grand taſte. By uniting in a grand compoſition effects no leſs bold and beautiful than true and natural, he will acquire the ſame glory, that orators acquire by the ſublime, the glory of ſurpriſing, and, in a manner, exalting us above ourſelves.

CHAP. XVIII.

OF THE RECREATIONS OF A PAINTER.

A Painter muſt now and then break from theſe important ſtudies, and unbend the mind, that it may return to its work with new ſtrength and reliſh. We are told that the Carraccis, by way of relaxation, uſed to draw caricaturas, and propoſe pictureſque riddles to one another, by ſketching

ſketching out various devices which contained a great meaning under a few ſtrokes; ſome of which Malvaſia has thought worthy of his graver. Some maſters have been known, after finiſhing the day's work, to ſpend the duſk of the evening in conſidering the ſpots then forming on faces and walls; and taking down upon paper thoſe figures or groupes thereby ſuggeſted to their fancy; a practice recommended by da Vinci, as tending greatly to improve the inventive faculty. But of all the amuſements of this kind, the moſt uſeful ſeems to be that of the five points, in which the head, hands and feet of a figure are to be placed. By this exerciſe both the head and hand of an artiſt acquire dexterity. By it he may be ſaid to break himſelf to invention. By it he may expect often to hit upon the moſt beautiful attitudes; juſt as the fineſt thoughts are ſometimes ſuggeſted by the difficulty of rhyming.

A painter, by employing even his hours of recreation in this manner, will find himſelf entirely taken up, as I have already ſaid he ſhould be, with his art. And, indeed, it is the only method by which a man can expect to render any exerciſe natural to him, and overcome every difficulty that may occur in undertakings of great conſequence. An education, in which all things, even the minuteſt, tend ſolely to one great end, is no other than the art of forming excellent men and heroes. And, accordingly, a very great genius has wiſely obſerved, that, if the Spartans became the wonder of all Greece, it was not ſo much on account of the excellence of any of their

laws in particular, as on account of the general tendency of them all to one and the ſame point (2). In like manner, a young painter may expect to attain the greateſt heights, when nothing diverts him from his purpoſe, or retards him in the purſuit of it; when he never turns his eyes or his thoughts from off his art (3), when he has perſuaded himſelf, that, let a man have ever ſo great a genius, he muſt not expect to ſucceed without pains; and, like a man armed at all points, joining a well-grounded theory to a continual and uninterrupted practice.

CHAP. XIX.

OF THE FORTUNATE CONDITION OF A PAINTER.

GREAT are the fatigues, no doubt, which a painter muſt undergo to become eminent in his art; but great, too, is the intereſt, with which he may expect to ſee them repaid. I know not, indeed, any art or ſcience, which enjoys ſo many, and ſuch conſiderable advanta-

(2) Sed ut de rebus, quæ ad homines ſolos pertinent potius loquamur, ſi olim Lacædemoniorum reſpublica fuit florentiſſima, non puto ex eo contigiſſe quod legibus uteretur, quæ ſigillatim ſpectatæ meliores eſſent aliarum civitatum Inſtitutis, nam contra multæ ex iis ab uſu communi abhorrebant, atque etiam bonis moribus adverſabantur, ſed ex eo quod ab uno tantum legiſlatore conditæ ſibi omnes conſentiebant, atque in eundem ſcopum collimabant. Carteſius in Diſſertatione de Methodo.

(3) Les arts ſont come Eglè, dont le cœur n'eſt rendu,
Qu'a l'amant le plus tendre, et le plus aſſidu.
Dans l'Epitre a Hermothime.

ges as that of painting. A very eminent phyſician, who has minutely deſcribed the various diſeaſes, uſually contracted by thoſe who apply themſelves to the ſeveral trades and profeſſions, attributes them all either to the vapours which they are obliged to inhale, or the kind of life which they are obliged to lead; as though theſe diſeaſes were ſo many penalties, which nature had inflicted on the learning of man. In regard to painting, he has not been able to charge it with any thing, but the ſmell of its oils, and the fumes of its vermillion and ceruſe, the firſt generated by mercury, the other extracted from lead by means of vinegar; both which he condemns as very hurtful to the conſtitution; alleging, as a proof of their poiſonous quality, the ſhort lives of the firſt rate painters, by whom, no doubt, he means Parmigianino, Correggio, Annibal, and a few others; but, above all, Raphael da Urbino, who, it is well known, was carried off in the flower of his youth (4). But any one, ever ſo

(4) Ego quidem quotquot novi pictores, & in hac & in aliis urbibus, omnes fere ſemper valetudinarios obſervavi. Et ſi pictorum hiſtoriæ evolvantur, non admodum longævos fuiſſe conſtabit, ac præcipuè, qui inter eos præſtantiores fuerint. Raphaelem Urbinatem Pictorem celeberrimum, in ipſo juventæ flore e vivis ereptum fuiſſe legimus, cujus immaturam mortem Balthaſſar Caſtilioneus eleganti carmine deflevit . . . . . Aſt alia potior cauſa ſubeſt, quæ pictores morbis obnoxios reddit, colorum nempe materia, quam ſemper præ manibus habent, ac ipſis ſub naribus, &c. . . . . Cinnabarim ſobolem eſſe Mercurii, Ceruſſam ex plumbo parari . . . . . nemo non novit, & propter hanc cauſam ſatis graves noxas ſub-

ſo little acquainted with the hiſtory of painting, may oppoſe to theſe teſtimonies the very long life of Cortona, le Brun, Jouvenet, Giordano, Cornelio Poelemburg, Lionardo da Vinci, Primaticcio, and Guercino, who all lived to above ſeventy; of Pouſſin, Mignard, Carlo Maratti, Loreneſe, Albani, Tintoret, Jacopo Baſſano, and Michael Angelo, who lived to above eighty; of Solimene, Cignani, and Gian Bellino, who attained ninety; and particularly Tiziano Vecellio, another prince of painting, who died in his ninety ninth year, and that too of a contagious diſtemper. It looks therefore, as if this great man ſought to charge the art with ſome diſorder or another, merely becauſe he was a phyſician, and the title of his book ſeemed to require it. The truth is, that the only diſorders, to which painters are ſubject, are, as the proverb goes, ceruſe diſeaſes. One would imagine almoſt, that nature, in this inſtance, intended to exempt painting, as a favourite art, which, on account of its repreſenting her beauties better than any other, ſhe conſidered with a more than ordinary degree of partiality and affection.

A PAINTER may, without fatigue, confine himſelf to his work from morning till night: an advantage unknown to the Poet, and the Mathematician, whoſe buſineſs, being all head-work, requires a moſt intenſe meditation, which the mind, incapable of being long bent, is incapable

ſequi. Iiſdem igitur affectibus, licet non ita graviter, illos vexari neceſſum eſt, ac cæteros Metallurgos. Bernardini Ramazzini de Morbis Artificum Diatriba, Cap. ix. Patav. 1713.

ble of enduring; whereas in painting, whatever ſtudy the invention and diſpoſition, and certain niceties of expreſſion, colouring and deſign may require, the greateſt part of the work belongs to the hands, upon which depends the execution of what the mind has planned. And when once a painter is well gounded in the principles of his art, and has acquired a thorough facility of hand, the crayon and the pencil run, as it were, of themſelves, with the ſmalleſt impulſe of the inventive faculty. In fact, we know it is cuſtomary with ſome maſters to converſe freely, while painting, with thoſe about them; the nature of their art being ſuch, that, in the exerciſe of it, they may, like Julius Cæſar, often attend to different objects at one and the ſame time.

If any mortal has a right to flatter himſelf with a long courſe of happineſs, it is certainly the painter. By ſpending moſt of his time in company, and being never totally excluded from it, he runs the leſs riſk of growing ſower or melancholy. When alone, he enjoys, in common with the poet, the ſupreme pleaſure of creation; and has, beſides, the ſuperior advantage of knowing that his art is more popular; there not being a man, from the higheſt to the loweſt, from the moſt learned to the moſt illiterate, over whom painting has not a very great hold and empire (5). He is conſtantly employed on

(5) Vel quum Pauſiaca torpes inſane tabella,
Qui peccas minus atque ego? quum Fulvi Rutubæque,
Aut Placedejani contento poplite miror

on the moſt beautiful and enchanting ſubjects; nor is there, in the immenſe ſphere of the viſual faculty, a ſingle object, which is not a fund of entertainment to him.

As delight is the principal end of his art, he is honoured and careſſed by every one, there being few, who do not often ſtand in need of company to baniſh irkſomeneſs the moſt mortal enemy of man; who from this art, therefore, derives no ſmall advantage. Neither uſhers, nor guards, are able to ſtop irkſomeneſs, or hinder it from penetrating into the moſt ſolemn audiences, and the cabinets of thoſe, whom the vulgar conſider as ſunk in the boſom of happineſs. To this it is chiefly owing, that able painters have, in all ages, been highly honoured and rewarded by princes, as ſo many operators of that ſweet inchantment, which converts a canvas into the moſt pleaſing and wonderful ſcenes in nature; which breaks the fetters of the ſoul, and exalts a man, as it were, above himſelf. Need I add, that ſlaves were formerly forbid the exerciſe of this art, always reckoned the firſt of the liberal arts (6); that, as both uſeful and delightful,

Prælia rubrica picta aut carbone: velut ſi
Re vera pugnent, feriant, vitentque moventes
Arma viri, nequam & ceſſator Davus: at ipſe
Subtilis veterum judex & callidus audis.
Hor. L. II. Sat. vii.

(6) Et hujus (Pamphili) auctoritate effectum eſt Sicyone primum, deinde & in tota Græcia, ut pueri ingenui ante omnia graphicen, hoc eſt picturam in buxo docerentur, recipereturque ars ea in primum gradum liberalium. Semper quidem honos ei fuit, ut ingenui exercerent, mox ut honeſti: perpetuo interdicto ne ſervitia docerentur. Ideo neque in

ful, it made part of the education of children of family with Grammar, Muſick, and Gymnaſtic exerciſes (7); that the ancient painters were ever held in the greateſt honour, the moſt grateful reward to generous minds, by the learned people of Greece, that is, by thoſe, who by their virtues and their arms ſubdued the world. And what honours have not been conferred on many of our modern painters, whoſe works prove ſo great an ornament to the age that gave them birth, and to the countries which now poſſeſs them (8)?

CHAP. XX.

CONCLUSION.

AND, if this divine art is now leſs honoured and favoured by Princes than it uſed to be (9), it muſt, to ſay the truth, be entirely attributed to the little merit of the artiſts, who, having long quitted the right paths in which the

hac, neque in toreutice ullius qui ſervierit opera celebrantur. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. L. XXXV. C. x.

(7) Ἐσὶ δὲ τέτταρα χεδὸν ἃ πεδεύειν εἰώθασι, γράμματα, καὶ γυμναστικὴν, καὶ μουσικὴν, καὶ τέταρτον ἔνιοι γραφικὴν. Τὴν μὲν γραμματικὴν, καὶ γραφικὴν ὡς χρησίμους πρὸς τὸν βίον ὕσας καὶ πολυχρήσους . . . . . ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὴν γραφικὴν, ὡς ἵνα ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις ὠνοίοις μὴ διαμαρτάνωσιν ἀλλ' ὦσιν ἀνεξαπάτητοι πρὸς τὴν τῶν σκευῶν ὠνήν τε καὶ πρᾶσιν, ἢ μᾶλλον ὅτι ποιεῖ θεωρητικὸν τὸ περὶ τὰ σώματα κάλλους. Τὸ δὲ ζητεῖν πανταχῆ τὸ χρήσιμον, ἧκιστα ἁρμόττει τοῖς μεγαλοψύχοις καὶ τοῖς ἐλευθέροις.

Ariſt. de Rep. L. VIII. C. iii.

(8) Primumque dicemus quæ reſtant de pictura arte quondam nobili tunc cum expeteretur a regibus populiſque, & illos nobilitante quos eſſet dignata poſteris tradere. C. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. L. XXXV. C. i.

(9) Θεων τὸ εὕρημα.

Philoſtrat. in Proem. L. I. de Imag.

ancient

ancient maſters uſed to travel, affect to call that dry, which approaches natural beauty, and that pedantic and affected, which contains the leaſt learning. One would imagine, that they did not aim at finiſhing their pieces as they ſhould do, ſo much as at having a great number upon their hands at the ſame time. Too many reſemble a certain painter, whoſe name I am aſhamed to mention, who, to apologize for his finiſhing his works in a ſlovenly manner, uſed to ſay, that he painted merely to get money (8). It is now, indeed, hard to meet with an artiſt, who, well grounded in the ſciences, and entirely wrapt up in his profeſſion; who, neither aſſuming the liberties allowed to mere practitioners, nor ſtooping ſlaviſhly to the whims of others, can ſay with truth: I paint only for myſelf, and for the art.

Let the Apelles's, the Raphaels, the Titians but appear again; and there will not, I anſwer for it, be wanting Alexanders, Charleſes, and Leos. And if, through ſome ſtrange and uncommon malignity of fortune, an exquiſite artiſt ſhould happen not to meet with favour from the Great, he may, however, be ſure of acquiring that honour, which is the genuine offspring of virtue, and never forſakes her; which will always flouriſh in the mouths of men; and which it is not in the power of kings to confer (9).

(8) Deſchamps Vie de Vandycke.

(9) . . . . . Honour not confer'd by Kings. Pope's One Thouſand Seven Hundred and Thirty-eight.

FINIS.